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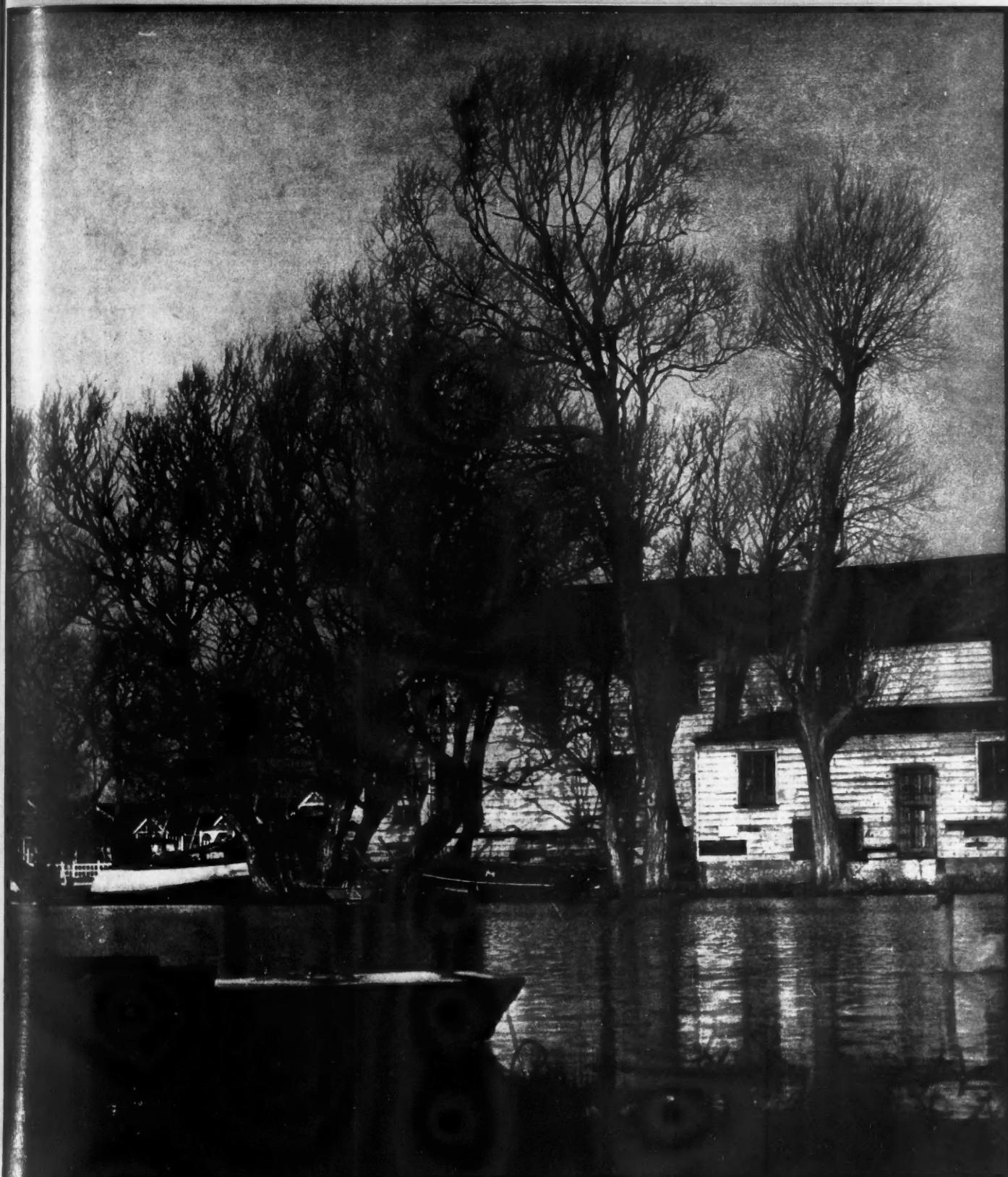
COUNTRY LIFE

On Sale Friday

MARCH 14, 1947

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COUNTRY LIFE—MARCH 14, 1947

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WANTED

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WORK wanted by two capable domestic workers, thirties, together or separately, in guest house, farm, hotel, etc. West or South-West England, or would travel. Jointly housework, driving, cooking, secretarial, sewing. Good accommodation essential. Free April.—Box 206.

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YOUNG LADY desires resident job in country, shorthand typing and willing to help care for small children. Drives a car.—Write, Box 198.

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REQUIRED for a large Country Mansions Staffordshire, a capable House Carpenter able to run private lighting.—Apply: RA. ESTATES COMPANY, Estate Office, Ecclesall Stans.

WANTED, single-handed Gardener, Kent village. Live in. Knowledge pruning and rotoscythe advantageous.—Apply, with particulars and references, Box 208.

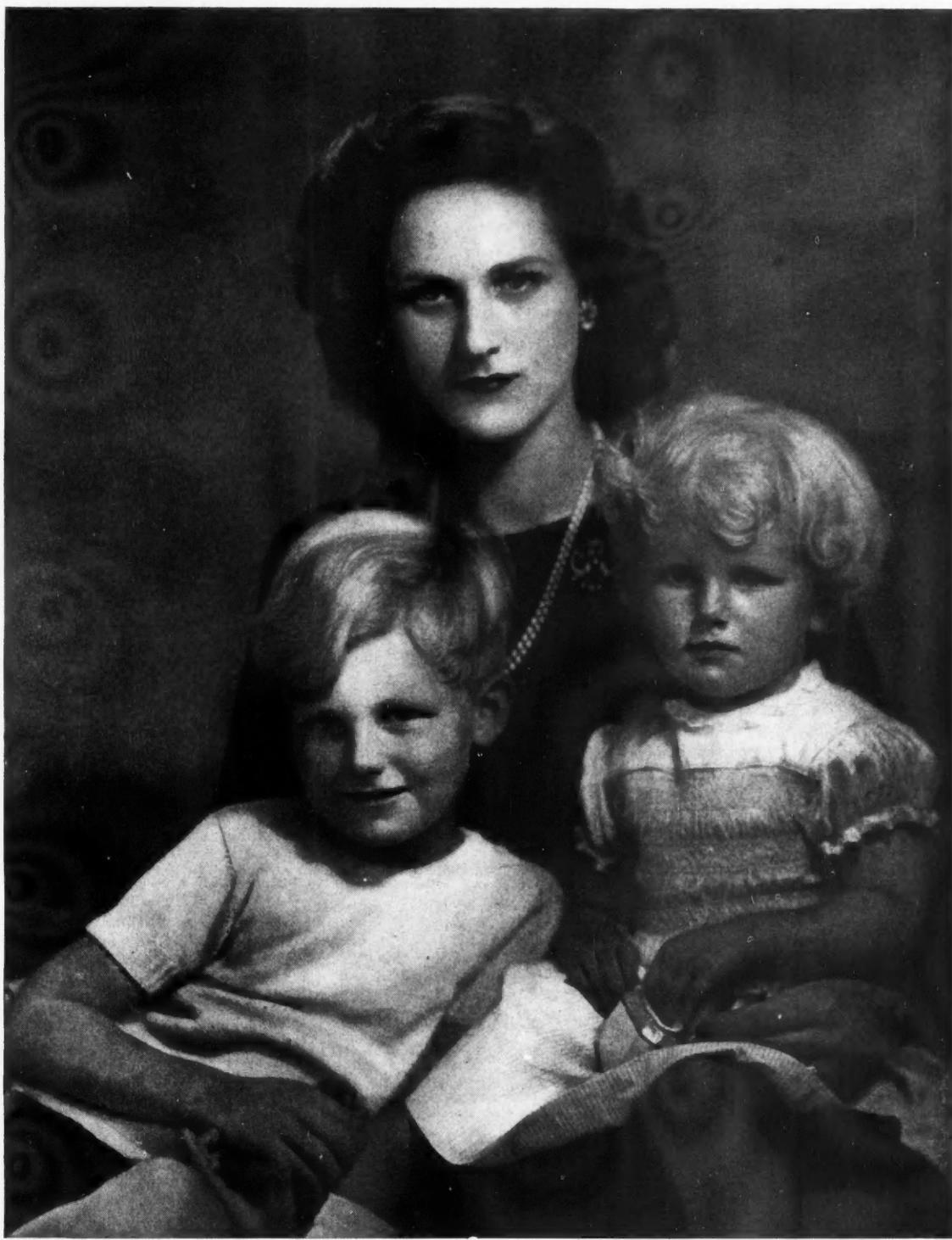
WANTED, good Head Gardener for situation in Midlands, where second gardener also employed. Must have knowledge of fruit and greenhouses. Flat available. In reply, state previous experience and what wages required.—Box 212.

OTHER PROPERTY AND AUCTIONS
ADVERTISING PAGE 450

COUNTRY LIFE

Vol. CI No. 2617

MARCH 14, 1947



Marcus Adams

MRS. G. HEATHCOAT-AMORY WITH HER CHILDREN, MICHAEL AND AMANDA

Mrs. G. Heathcoat-Amory is the daughter of Commodore E. C. Denison, R.N. (Ret.) and Mrs. Denison, of 5, Lyall Street, SW.1, and the widow of Major Gerald Heathcoat-Amory. Her engagement to Lieutenant-Colonel Roderick Heathcoat-Amory, son of the late Sir Ian Heathcoat-Amory, Bart., and the late Lady Heathcoat-Amory, of Knightshayes Court, Tiverton, Devon, was announced recently

COUNTRY LIFE

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RURAL RECONDITIONING

IN September of 1945 the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, which enabled grants to be made and loans to be offered to owners of rural cottages in need of reconditioning, lapsed. The newly-appointed Minister of Health refused either to re-enact them or to adopt a Bill extending their scope, which had been prepared by the Caretaker Government before the General Election. The first reason given was that it was contrary to the new Government's policy to make grants to private persons, but subsequently the Minister explained further that it was also desired to prevent the diversion of labour from the building of new houses in rural areas and elsewhere. He also agreed to ask the Rural Housing Sub-committee of the Central Housing Advisory Committee to submit a report on the subject. That Sub-committee, generally given the name of its chairman, Sir Arthur Hobhouse, had already made a careful survey of available rural housing in all its aspects, and they have now reported again—to much the same effect as before. The main practical matters to be considered are whether any substantial increase in rural accommodation could be achieved by reconditioning, whether it would be possible to achieve this increase rapidly and without withdrawing labour and materials from the production of new houses, and whether satisfactory arrangements can be devised for the administration of a new Act which would make it the duty of local authorities to stimulate and assist reconditioning to the maximum extent.

To all these questions the Hobhouse Committee return positive answers. During the past three years rural housing authorities have been conducting a comprehensive survey of all inhabited houses in rural districts, and the statistical reports for many areas are now available. The Committee's analysis of the figures leads them to the belief that there are at the present time approximately 100,000 houses in rural districts suitable for reconditioning, each of which would add substantially—if not as much as would a new house—to the total of accommodation. With regard to the question of labour, the Committee come to the conclusion that there is labour on the countryside able to do the work required but not available for building new houses. In particular the very small builder, not equipped to undertake new housing contracts, is well suited to the careful individual work involved in reconditioning. The Committee also note that much of the labour in country districts is immobile but is nevertheless capable of reconditioning property near at hand, and that many of the craftsmen remaining in our villages are more conversant with repairs and alterations to old buildings than with the erection of new. As to administration, they think that the Rural District Council should be the authority for the purpose

of any new Act, and that if the Minister were given default powers to transfer functions to the County Council, it would not be difficult to ensure that full and proper use was made of such an Act. As for its terms, they could be framed so as to ensure that public money was spent only upon producing dwellings initially satisfactory in all respects, that the benefit of any grant made accrued to the tenant, and that the building continued to be used for the housing of rural workers.

The conditions under which assistance to owners should be granted, and the nature of the financial aid, have often been discussed in these pages. There is much to be said for the generous attitude suggested by the Hobhouse Committee, though if such generous assistance is to be given or offered, it must clearly be made the duty of the owner either to make use of it or to abandon his property to the housing authority. The question arises whether—as Mr. Bevan has asked and many local authorities have denied—it ought to be given at all. The reasons for denying it must be strong indeed at a time like this, when agricultural revival is all-important, and rural housing is in such a dire condition. They never amount, so far as we have seen, to more than a political statement that grants from public funds ought not to be made for the improvement of private property. This attitude, which has caused Miss Jenny Lee to produce a Minority Report of her own, was fully dealt with by the Hobhouse Committee in the original Report on Rural Housing, in which they declared that it arose out of a misunderstanding of the Acts concerned and their intention. As the Silkin Committee suggested, their principle might well be extended to urban as well as rural reconditioning.

MARCH MORNING

*IT is here! It has come again—
The sweet and bitter hour
When the heart breaks into pain
As the earth breaks into flower:
When the sun and the balmy air
Sweep fortitude away,
And spring is harder to bear
Than the bleakest winter day.*

LESLEY GREY.

BACK TO SUMMER TIME

PUTTING the clocks forward in March and again in April runs counter to the countryman's common sense. He knows how to make the best use of daylight without fooling himself by changing clock time. However, he accepts this Summer Time as an inevitable contribution to solving the crisis into which we have drifted. According to the Home Secretary, only 150,000 tons of fuel will be saved, but the Government hope that by altering the hands of the clock they will induce more townsmen to work double shifts in daylight. That is on the credit side. On the debit side there is the unduly long working week that will be imposed on farmers and farm-workers, if they are to go by the clock and still get the hay in and do the many other urgent jobs that depend for their timing on the sun. While this necessity is imposed on agriculture, workers in other industries can surely be expected to forgo claims for a 40- or 44-hour week. Longer hours of farm work mean extra costs. What this will amount to this season is hard to estimate. The figure of £8,000,000 has been mentioned, and this may well prove a fair guess. At the moment all farm work is far in arrears, and even without altering the clock a great deal of overtime would have been necessary to get through all the work that lies ahead for the farming community.

WATCHING THE RIVER RUN BY

THE decision of the Thames Conservancy Board to make the Thames towpath from Teddington to Cricklade into a riverside walk is highly commendable in principle, though perhaps the Oxfordshire representatives were right who questioned whether this is the time to do so. A towpath, where it exists, is one of those amenities so much taken for granted that it does not occur to the public to wonder to whom it belongs or who keeps it up. Actually the Conservancy Board own only 18½ out of the 136 miles concerned, with rights for towing over

parts of the remainder, which all belongs to other persons or bodies. Towing is practically non-existent, and so, for many lengths of its course, is the path. While everybody will agree that the right of passage should be secured to the public, it is startling to learn that it will cost £50,000 a year, at the outset, to provide the right and a practicable path. The Conservancy Board has, in effect, saddled the ratepayers of the riverside counties with finding this amount, and at a time when they are hard pressed to provide the necessities of life, in order to undertake what at best can be regarded as an agreeable amenity primarily for the enjoyment of persons who are not contributing to the cost. It is true that the amount is relatively small, but it is time the country realised that it is in no condition to spend anything on non-productive undertakings.

STARLINGS ABROAD

THE unusually large flocks of starlings seen in London recently remind us again that one man's meat may be another man's poison. During the first Five-year Plan in Russia every effort was made to induce these birds to multiply: all children between the ages of twelve and fourteen were expected to build one starling house every year. On the other hand, as a writer in the Canadian *Forest and Outdoors* records, they have become a nuisance in the United States since they were introduced about sixty years ago as likely controllers of insect pests. They are now judged, indeed, to be the commonest of all birds in Eastern North America. In Washington a vast flock is reported to have gathered nightly near the White House. An adviser said that starlings roosted only on small twigs, so the trees were ruthlessly pruned and the birds then congregated on the ledges of the buildings, whence they refused to be moved by the fire brigade. In Philadelphia, where building roosts were apparently formed without any direct human encouragement, a steeplejack was employed to distribute an offensive-smelling substance on the favourite ledges. As birds have little or no sense of smell, the action had no effect; but the Library Board's more ingenious attempt to scare starlings from the library achieved a result. A horned owl was borrowed from the local zoo and hung in a cage on the building. The owl proved an attraction, and the original congregation of starlings was much increased by others who came to look and scold. More recently Cornell University is reported to have evolved a method of starling control simply by putting up easily accessible nest-boxes . . . in a three-year control experiment . . . practically the entire starling population of a two-mile-square test area in New York accepted the boxes for nidification purposes."

A ONE-ARMED PRODIGY

NEW comes from America of a wonderful one-armed golfer, Jimmy Nichols, by name, who is likely to play in our Open Championship at Hoylake. Leonard Crawley, who has been playing with him, declares that he would always finish in the first dozen in a professional competition here, and if this is so the stewards at Hoylake who have to look after Nichols's match will have a hard time of it, for he will be such a magnet for the crowd that the two-handed champions may be deserted. It appears that he lost his right arm when he was six-and-twenty, took up golf three years later and three years later again became a professional. He drives back-handed with his left hand, but apparently puts fore-hand. Whether he is naturally right- or left-handed we are not told, but from his putting forehand we should be inclined to believe that his left hand had always been the master. There have been several very good one-handed players in this country, but none who have come near up to this standard. France possessed a very fine one-handed professional some years ago in Yves Bocatson, who was perfectly capable of beating the best of amateurs round La Boule. He, if memory serves, had lost his left arm in an accident, and played all his strokes forehand with his right hand. If Nichols comes here the most blasé of spectators has still something to look forward to.



F. H. Crowe

HEAVY SKIES OVER THE KERRY HILLS

A COUNTRYMAN'S NOTES

By

Major C. S. JARVIS

WITH them in this, for quite recently I was asked by a friend to drink a pre-luncheon glass of sherry with him at his Service club, but just before it was served the clock struck twelve. On the last stroke a "sparrow-hawk" waiter swooped down on my host and reminded him that, as no guests were allowed in the club after twelve midday, I must get out !

* * *

DURING my many voyages to and from the Middle East I saw signals of distress hoisted on more than one occasion, but luckily never on the vessel in which I was travelling.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTIONS

We regret that, owing to the effect of the fuel shortage on paper supplies, we have been compelled to abandon the four remaining enlarged 2s. 6d. numbers to complete the six 2s. 6d. numbers which had been planned for the year.

Subscribers who have paid the subscription rate which included the price of six 2s. 6d. numbers will be credited with the amount due to them. This sum will be deducted when the subscription falls due for renewal, or refunded immediately on request.

The new subscription rates (omitting 2s. 6d. numbers) will be found at the head of the leader page and in the imprint at the foot of page 3 of cover.

All subscriptions will be extended by two weeks to cover the loss of the two issues for February 21 and February 28, which were suspended during the fuel crisis.

There was the time when we met in calm weather a small Greek steamer off Crete, which first hoisted the flag signal code to say that she was sinking and later altered it to state that there was a mutiny on board. After we had lowered a boat to go to their assistance, the officer in charge of the launch came back in a very bad temper with the first mate of the Greek ship, and later, after returning him to his own vessel with every indication of contempt, we continued our voyage, the belching smoke from our funnels suggesting that we were not amused.

Owing to the time-old Merchant Service motto of "Do Not Tell the Passengers Anything," we never got to the bottom of the story, but my steward, when I was about to tip him on arrival at Marseilles, said that there were two schools of thought among the crew about the episode. One was that the Greek captain had opened the sea-cocks to sink his ship so as to collect the insurance money, and that this had caused a mutiny among the crew because they did not want to get wet. The other was that "them Dagoes are always making a muck-up with their signal flags, and what they had really tried to send was nothing about sinking or mutiny, but just that they wanted some coal from us, as their bunkers were empty. That's an old Greek dodge to get buckshee fuel."

* * *

WHEN an important message can be sent by the employment of one flag only, which everyone recognises, instead of the usual three or four, signalling between ships is greatly simplified. As a case in point one may quote the plain yellow flag, which everyone knows means "Quarantine" without troubling to look it up in the code book. There should be no difficulty about signalling shortage of fuel in future, since if the much-vaunted banner of the National Coal Board is run up on the signal halyard to the masthead, everybody will recognise it at once as meaning: "We Have No Coal."

OUR birds' breakfast table, which incidentally is a real table capable of seating four humans or at least forty birds, is set in a porch outside the dining-room window. It is open on three sides to the garden, and the roof overhead is supported by two oak uprights. Consequently it is sheltered from the rain and also, so both we and the bird members of the club imagined, from unwelcome visitors of the hawk species. This morning at lunch time (for we do lunches as well as breakfasts) when there were a goodly number of members taking their midday meal, there was a sudden shadow, and a large greyish shape swept in at one side of the porch, over the table and out the other side. The fleeting apparition was, so far as I could see, a sparrow-hawk, but he came and went so quickly that I was not quite certain whether I had really seen something or not. The small birds, on the other hand, were quite sure about it, for two blue tits ducked so vigorously as the sinister shape swept overhead that they bumped their beaks on the table; a robin who was just going to alight back-pedalled vigorously and hit the dining-room window when going in reverse, and a coal-tit and a chaffinch dived under the table. In fact, the consternation caused was about on a par with that which would occur if a Ministry of Food inspector suddenly walked into a London club at the luncheon hour and shouted: "Food Inspecting Officer—'Shun.'"

* * *

A CAREFUL investigation of the ground to leeward of the hawk's swoop did not disclose the presence of any feathers, and it seems that the quick action taken by the luncheon party was effective, since all the well-known members turned up for breakfast the following day, though in a highly nervous state. As might be expected, the raid has affected their confident bearing, and there seems to be a general feeling that the club is not quite the place it was in other days. I can sympathise

A PREHISTORIC TRADE ROUTE

*Written and Illustrated by
G. BERNARD WOOD*

AN interesting tract of marshland near York, famous among naturalists as a survival from the Ice Age, has recently been acquired as a Nature Reserve for Yorkshire. Through the generosity of the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and of Sir Francis Terry, of Middlethorpe Manor, York, Askham Bog passes into the safe keeping of the recently formed Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Trust, whose aim to preserve certain areas of the county as sanctuaries for rare wild life is furthered in notable fashion by this early acquisition.

Situated roughly three miles south-west of York, on the left side of the road as one approaches the old city from Tadcaster, the Bog and its immediate surroundings of grazing and arable land were threatened with suburban encroachments. As result of the gift, naturalists can now study without hindrance these 65 acres of marshland whose fauna and flora hark back to primeval times, while historians can rejoice in the retention of an important link in a long chain of events which, rooted in local geography, spreads out over large areas of the north of England. For Askham Bog is a vestige of one of those extensive glacial swamps or lakes that made the Vale of York one vast fen and had somehow to be bridged.

Boys of Bootham School, York, who delight in being members of the oldest school natural history society in the British Isles, conducted a survey of Askham Bog in 1945, and their Report, published a few months ago, throws much new light on the habits of its occupants. Birds in great variety haunt the undergrowth, while the pools are fished by heron, mallard and black-headed gull. Many species of butterfly flit through the miniature glades of silver birch, and here and there in sections named happily by former naturalists—Chandler's Whin, Nearer Jungle, Farther Jungle, etc.—milkwort, water parsnip, swamp bedstraw, saw-wort, wild basil and royal fern add their charms to a great profusion of plant life. Some time before the 17th century when the Bog was "farmed" for peat, its character was somewhat changed by drainage, along with other factors; yet, rich in plant and animal life, it is still a recognisable link with the time when early man crossed its margins on higher ground to west and south-west, or when the Romans bordered it on the south-west with a road to Tadcaster (*Calcaria*).

The two strips of higher ground are crescentic ridges—terminal moraines of a great glacier which served for centuries as causeways over the far-flung swamps. One ridge now carries the Tadcaster road, while the other sweeps round

via Acomb and Askham Bryan with a secondary road that joins the Tadcaster highway near Bilbrough.

Just outside York the ridges converge, providing for the next half-mile or so a natural platform for The Mount, and then, after a brief dip, for Micklegate itself. On the right of The Mount is the Knavesmire, now entirely drained, of course, but, like Askham Bog, once submerged, as the latter part of the name (mere) suggests. From Micklegate the River Ouse, which drains so much of the surrounding country, is crossed at Ouse Bridge, and then the ridge continues eastwards.

York owes its existence to this morainic crossing. Thousands of years before the Romans came, native tribesmen and invaders crossed the Vale of York by this natural "bridge," or by a similar one near Escrick, seven miles down the river. At York, however, the gap to be forded was narrower than that at Escrick, and much of the trade and culture of northern England depended on this route through the wastes.

Meanwhile, let us pause at Ouse Bridge, the significance of which comparatively few people recognise. The native trackways probably came down to the river at this fording-place. Flint for weapons and tools, gold and jet ornaments, bronze work to be bartered for food, Roman pottery—these and many other commodities figured in the pageant of trade that this crossing must have witnessed. The Romans early saw the strategic value of the site, and in A.D. 71 they began to build *Eboracum* (York) to command this vital point in the great cross-country route that linked the east coast round Bridlington and Filey with the west coast at the Ribble estuary. Characteristically, they spanned the Ouse with a wooden bridge, siting it, however, a few yards up-river where a landing stage, reached by an interesting stone passage (formerly one of York's main streets) beneath



ASKHAM BRYAN LIES ON THE FRINGE OF ASKHAM BOG

the Guildhall, marks the site to-day. But when they evacuated the country, their bridge was destroyed and trade began to flow again over the old tribal crossing.

Ouse Bridge is almost a generic term in the annals of York. The first stone bridge was erected in 1180. In 1565, when an ice-jam caused the two central arches of a later bridge to be swept away, we find the Lord Mayor of York appealing to Sir Martin Bowes, of London, for help. Accordingly, Bowes sent Thomas Harper, "the most expert workman that aperteyneth to London Bridge," and an assistant who is to receive 2s. 6d. per day "meat and drynk and lodgynge, and bootes to stand in the water." Thus the importance of Ouse Bridge was realised even in London, but Harper could not be spared for long. "He cannot be absent above one moneth," wrote Bowes.

An interesting impression of this mediæval bridge after its restoration, when the arches were reduced in number, occurs in a stained-glass panel at the Merchant Adventurers' Hall in Fossgate. Sea-going craft are moored at the adjoining staith (the Ouse was then tidal) while they were being loaded with goods for European ports. In an etching by Nathan Drake, dated 1756, the bridge provides a fitting background for "A Noble Terras Walk" lately laid out by the Corporation on the east bank (Fulford side) of the Ouse. Beaux and belles of Georgian society preen themselves on the new promenade, sublimely unconscious that it was founded on the primeval morainic terrace along which early tribesfolk would pause, fingering their bits of finery perhaps, before crossing the Ouse. Incidentally, this etching was reproduced as a Christmas card design for 1946 by the York Georgian Society. It is a pleasant reminder of the surroundings of Ouse Bridge before the present structure was built in 1817, on the same historic site, by Peter Atkinson, architect.

The old tribal routes that led into York from the east coast passed through or near such places as Malton, Sledmere, Fimber, Garroby and Stamford Bridge. It is significant that, centuries later, when Harald Hardrada, King of Norway, sailed up the Humber and then the Ouse to attack York, he withdrew to Stamford Bridge soon after his victory, probably because from this place he could command the two morainic ridges, in other words the aged routes over the swampy Vale of Ouse by way of York and Escrick.

Another remnant of the marshland through which the York section picked its way occurs in the neighbourhood of Bolton Percy, near Tadcaster. Not far from Askham Bog, though on the opposite side of the York-Tadcaster highway (which the Romans lined with their tomb) these marshes, or "hags" as they are called in Yorkshire, were once submerged. Waterfowl still haunt the wastes, as by ancient right, and



THIXENDALE, A YORKSHIRE WOLD SETTLEMENT, NEAR THE GARROWBY SECTION OF THE TRADE ROUTE



THE LEEDS AND LIVERPOOL CANAL RUNS THROUGH THE AIRE GAP

at Bolton Percy itself the marsh, thick with reeds and willows, is spanned by a picturesque wooden bridge resting on a long succession of primitive trestles.

On the west of York, the Early Bronze Age Trade Route, as it is usually called by archaeologists, went by way of Tadcaster, Adel (near Leeds), Ilkley and the Skipton district, thence through a remarkable bit of country known as the Aire Gap, to Ribchester, Lancashire, Preston and the west coast.

Thus effectively spanned, the neck of northern England provided a direct route for trade and culture between Scandinavia and Ireland, which in the Bronze Age was "the Eldorado of Western Europe." Archaeologists have found abundant evidence of this cultural movement; on the Wolds, for example, Bronze Age food vessels have been unearthed that closely resemble those of Irish workmanship, also jet necklaces obviously made as replicas of the gold lunettes of Ireland. Two gold girdles, discovered at Yeadon, near Otley, provide further evidence that points to the introduction of beautiful ornaments and fashions from Ireland via the Bronze Age cross-country route.

An important Roman road, or series of roads, follows the route for the great part of the

way. Warburton's map of 1720 refers to the Roman road-system here, saying that "for the most part (it) is visible, being paved with stone throughout." Since his day most of the stones have disappeared.

Hills, not marshes, had to be negotiated in this western section; a fine stretch of it confronts me as I write, for my window overlooks Otley Chevin, which carries the track high above Airedale and Wharfedale. The Chevin makes a romantic skyline, and when the imagination peoples it with tribesfolk and invaders, traveling workers in bronze whose craft may have been learned in Bologna, and legionaries marching to join the Lingones detachment which garrisoned Ilkley (*Olicana*) during the third century A.D., it becomes a vivid touchstone of history.

Beyond Ilkley and Skipton the old trade route reaches a point comparable in geological interest to the glacial ridges in the Ouse basin. Just as the modelling hand of Nature accounted for those features, so has it produced here the Aire Gap. Kendall and Wroot in their *Geology of Yorkshire* refer to the Aire Gap as "one of the unsolved puzzles of Yorkshire geology. . . . As a Yorkshire river flowing to the Humber, the Aire rises on the wrong side of the Pennine axis." The crossing place is very flat; not an ordinary pass, but a kind of hummocky plain, a mile or so wide and three or four miles long, through which the infant Aire coming down in meandering fashion from the Malham country flows serenely on, unchallenged by Flasby Fell and Elslack Moor, which seem, in fact, to have stepped politely aside to let the intruder through.

This strange configuration of the land explains why Gargrave, situated in the mouth of the Gap, proved so vulnerable during the Scottish raids of the 12th century, when the place had no fewer than nine churches looted and destroyed in the general pillaging and was relieved of much other wealth besides.

Skipton Castle was built to guard this natural corridor through the hills, just as, centuries earlier, the Romans set up a fort (Burwen Castle) at Elslack, overlooking the Gap on the south to defend what was known then and for centuries afterwards as the York Gate. Yet the Romans, too, must have found defence difficult. Nature had certainly provided a wonderfully easy way through the Pennines, but the price of it was exacted in the sacking of the neighbourhood by wild hillmen in the 2nd century and again 200 years later. One of the burnt Roman villas was unearthed in Gargrave about 100 years ago, and other discoveries show that on both occasions the Romano-British residents had to flee and find refuge in the caves of Craven.

Nevertheless the Aire Gap was to prove a boon when the age of modern transport

dawned. The original prospectus of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal Company, dated 1766, stated that "It must be acceptable to the public to be informed that a person with great industry and application has discovered an opening betwixt the mountains of Yorkshire and Lancashire which is the most eligible, if not the only one, nature has formed for this important work, and that a plan and estimate is in considerable forwardness . . . of an entire navigable canal from Liverpool to Hull." Naïve? Yes, but who was then able to tell the compiler of the prospectus that the astonishingly convenient gap through which the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the L.M.S. main line now run, had been found and seized upon long before, with equal zeal and pleasure, doubtless, by prehistoric peoples! For the story of the Aire Gap, and of the entire cross-country route, is virtually a re-discovery of our time. The hand-maids of geology and archaeology have pieced the story together gradually, so that it now reads like a romance. There are still a few missing chapters, but the general route which the story illuminates, if followed with the aid of good maps and charts, provides for our generation a fresh approach to some grand hill and vale country, and a thrilling introduction to some of the origins of our cultural heritage.



ROMAN MEMORIAL STONE FOUND ON THE MOUNT, YORK
It depicts a funeral feast



ROMAN "FACE" VASE OF THE 4th CENTURY, FOUND NEAR THE MOUNT IN 1936

WHY HOLLIES FAIL TO BERRY

By D. T. MacFIE

WHY do hollies fail to berry? It is a perennial question and yet the answer is so simple. Most hollies are dioecious plants. In non-botanical language, they are sexed. Their flowers are not hermaphrodite and are borne, male and female, on separate plants. Plant female trees without a male and there is no pollen to fertilise the ovules unless, and it is always a possibility, insects carry it from farther afield. Plant males without females and there will still be no berries, though the entire insect world should decide to work overtime.

It is strange that so many people are unaware of this trait in a universally grown tree. The very fact that solitary specimens are so seldom berried affords a clue. It is true that nurserymen have not been helpful in their catalogue descriptions. Even in many of the more specious productions of pre-1939 one finds *Ilex aquifolium*, Golden Queen, the most common of the golden-leaved varieties, described as sterile. It is not. It is a perfectly good male variety masquerading, or should one say suffering, under a singularly inapt and ill-chosen name. Like all other varieties with variegated foliage, it is usually propagated vegetatively, so there is little hope of a daughter in the family, and berry-less it remains. Silver Queen is another unfortunate male whose first devoted raisers had not the patience to hold over its christening until such time as it proclaimed its sex in the obvious manner, and, as though to complete the picture of confusion, there is a female variety named Golden King, which is coyly described as berry-bearing.

The common holly, *Ilex aquifolium*, unlike these classical examples of ill-advised nomenclature, is normally raised from seed. As a result its sex is not constant, and male, female and bisexual forms are found. Two varieties named Silver and Golden Milkmaid are examples of variegated forms which can be either male or female, but most of the special varieties, some distinguished by unwieldy pseudo-botanical names in addition to the simpler colloquial ones, are one thing or the other.

The moral is obvious. When one is buying hollies the nurseryman must be coaxed, or bullied, into stating the facts of life as they apply to each variety.

Here for guidance is a sexed list of some of the best-known varieties: *altacereensis*, the Highclere holly, male; *camelliaefolia*, male; *crassifolia*, the leather-leaf holly, female; *crispa*,



A VARIETY OF *PERNETTYA MUCRONATA* WITH ROSE-COLOURED BERRIES
Such profusion of fruit is normal with staminate male plants to provide pollen

the screw-leaf holly, male; *Donningtonensis*, the Donnington holly, male; *ferox*, the hedgehog holly, male; *Fisherii*, male; *flavescens*, the moonlight holly, female; *fructo luteo*, yellow fruited, female; Golden Milkmaid, male and female; Golden Queen, male; Handsworth New Silver, female; *Mundyi*, male; *ovata*, male; *scotica*, female; Silver Milkmaid, male and female; Silver Queen, male; *Smithii*, male; *Watereriana*, male; and *Wilsonii*, female.

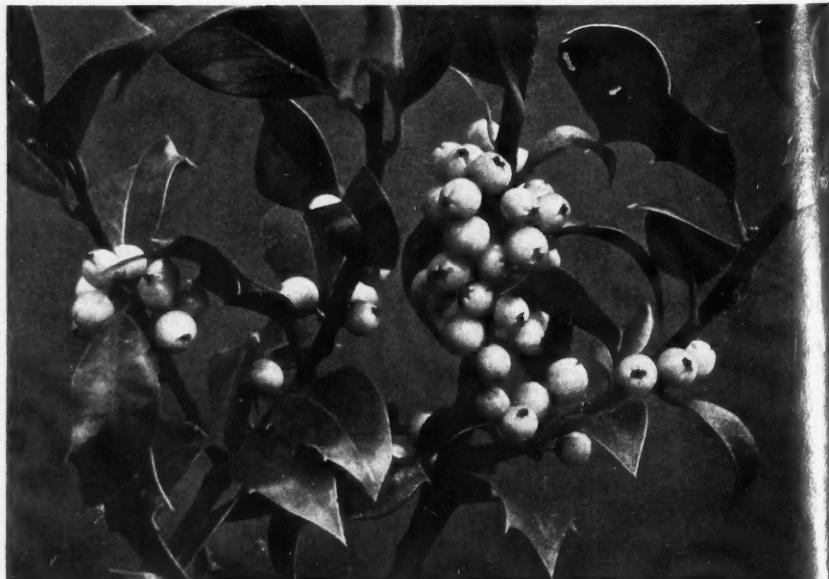
It is quite a simple matter to determine the sex of established trees. The flowers are small, but if a pocket glass is used the secret is out. Normal flowering time is May and June, and the dull-white, fragrant blossoms will be found clustered in the leaf-axils.

Ruscus aculeatus, the butcher's broom, so popular as a dyed foliage plant at Christmastime, is another plant with this peculiarity. Berries are seldom seen on it, for the female seems to be uncommonly hard to come by. In many ways, *ruscus* is an astonishing plant.

Though termed a shrub by most gardeners, it is only shrub-like, for its stems are not really woody. It is, in fact, a member of the lily family—akin to asparagus—and, like the latter, throws up new stems from the base. Then again its leaves are not leaves: they are flattened branches resembling leaves and performing the same functions, and are more correctly termed cladodes. The persistence of the evergreen cladodes is the reason for its popularity as a winter decoration, for they hold on the stems much longer than do true leaves.

The flowers are also remarkable in that they are apparently borne in the centres of the leaves and on a cursory examination appear to be stalkless. Again, first appearances are deceptive; examination with a glass will show that they are actually borne in the leaf-axils, but that the stalk is united with the midrib of the leaf.

Ruscus is a useful shrub apart from its value for cutting, for, unlike most evergreens, it will grow in really dense shade, but for berries one



A YELLOW-FRUITED HOLLY NAMED *ILEX FRUCTO LUTEO*

(Left) GOLDEN MILKMAID, A LOVELY BERRYING VARIETY HAVING GOLDEN-CENTRED LEAVES WITH WAVY MARGINS

must first find a source of sex-attested females.

Until its peculiarity was recognised, there were many disappointments with *Pernettya mucronata*. Quite a number of people, attracted by its brightly coloured berries in shades ranging from white through pink to purple, found that the plants refused to berry in their own garden. Examination of the flowers did not necessarily provide the answer, for the flowers may well be structurally hermaphrodite and yet be functionally feminine. Luckily, nurserymen have been less coy with pernettyas. The female berrying varieties have been described as such, and they have bestowed on the certifiably virile male plant the name of *P. mascula*. The latter is certainly virile. Just one or two bushes will serve the needs of a large female plantation.

Pernettyas have the reputation of being left untouched by birds, and they do seem to be safe from the average run of garden visitors, but I can vouch for the fact that pheasants find them very much to their liking. Twice I have known quite large plantations stripped in a

THE HIGHCLERE HOLLY, *ILEX HASTACLERENSIS*. This vigorous, large-leaved variety is a non-berrying male



ON SAYING "POOH!"

AMES THURBER tells a terrible story about a man who walked in his garden early one morning and found a unicorn there. He ran into the house and woke up his wife, crying: "There's a unicorn in the garden!" "Pooh!" she said (or words to that effect), "Everyone knows that the unicorn is a mythical monster." The man went out again and offered the unicorn a lily, which it ate. Then he returned to his wife and assured her: "There really is a unicorn in the garden. It ate a lily." This time his wife not only said "Pooh!" but added that her husband was a booby and she'd a good mind to have him taken away to a booby-hatch. He looked again in the garden, but the unicorn had gone; so he went thoughtfully to the telephone and (we may suppose that he smiled a wicked little smile as he did so) rang up a psychiatrist. Shortly afterwards the psychiatrist arrived at the house with two formidable henchmen. The wife told them eagerly: "My husband has gone crazy. He actually imagines there is a unicorn in the garden." "Have you ever heard such nonsense?" said the man. "Everybody knows that the unicorn is a mythical beast." The psychiatrist nodded to his henchmen, who seized the woman and carried her off to the asylum. The moral of the story, according to Mr. Thurber, is: "Don't count your boobies before they are hatched."

* * *

But it seems to me that it has another moral as well: it is a dreadful warning against saying "Pooh!" And I am reminded of it because of a rather extraordinary statement that I read the other day in an article about Gilbert White. He was not a very good naturalist, asserted the writer, because he was "too credulous." As an example of his foolish credulity, the writer gave his belief in that old wives' tale about the hibernation of swallows and martins, which prompted him to waste his time every autumn looking for their winter quarters, poking his stick into old thatch and even digging up the mud at the edge of ponds in search of hibernating *hirundinidae*.

What a fantastic notion! said the critic scornfully; but I am inclined to think that it would have been even more credulous of Gilbert White if he had believed, on the strength of the evidence then available, the apparently more fantastic notion that the birds flew away to Africa; just as Izaak Walton's theory of the spontaneous generation of eels, for which subsequent writers have mocked him, was far easier

to believe in 1650 than the incredible truth about that 3,000 miles journey to the Sargasso Sea. However, that is by the way; for my point is that a little healthy credulity on the part of a naturalist is an excellent thing, and that science has lost more than it has gained through the readiness of learned and self-assured experts to say "Pooh!"

* * *

"There's a funny butterfly in my garden," said a young lady to an expert in butterflies in July, 1945. "It looks a bit like the pictures I've seen of the Bath white." He was too polite to say "Pooh!" but he delivered a short lecture instead. "The female of the orange tip," he said, "which, incidentally, dear lady, wears no orange-tips, is dappled on the underside and may easily be mistaken for a Bath white when at rest. It is remarkable that you should have seen one so late in the season." A few days later a dozen Bath whites were reported in the neighbourhood; and before that *annus mirabilis* of butterfly migration was over no fewer than 650 specimens of the very rare vagrant were recorded from various places in Southern England.

There is a similar story about an ornithologist. An old labourer told him that he had shot a crane. "Ah, yes," said the ornithologist with a patronising smile, "I know that you people always speak of herons as cranes. The true crane, alas, is extinct in England." A few days later he happened to be passing the labourer's cottage and the old man, seeing him, said "I'll show thee that crane if thee'll come round to the back." It was very high (it was much too far gone to make a stuffed specimen) but it was certainly a genuine crane, *Megalornis grus*. I suppose it is remotely possible that it was a migrant which had fallen sick on passage; for passage cranes certainly fly over Britain, though at such a height that they are beyond the range of our eyesight. Much more likely, it had escaped from a private park or zoo. But in any case it would have looked very nice in a glass case in the ornithologist's collection, if only he had possessed a trifle of credulity.

* * *

One more story against the pooh-poohers, and then I have done. It is the remarkable story of the snake with legs, and a very fine field-naturalist of my acquaintance tells it against himself. In his youth, he says, Queen Victoria was on the throne, the universe was fixed and stable, Huxley and Darwin had written the last word about Evolution and the

remarkably short time and by a very few pheasants. For my own part, I would hesitate to name any berry as one that birds will not touch. One hears continually that this or that species is left alone, but opposite instances are unfailingly cited from other parts of the country, and even from near-by gardens. The palates of birds vary too much, as do our own, to allow of generalisations. I would confess, too, that I number myself among those enthusiasts who would cheerfully concede the birds a better title to the decorative fruits of a garden than myself. Strawberries and raspberries are a different matter. With them, the interests of both parties are identical, and there are, after all, no ornithological ration cards, but netting is a simple matter, and a part and parcel of good gardening routine.

Bullfinches in the spring are the most infuriating and therefore least welcome visitors. Once started on fruit-buds, they seem to become imbued with an urge to destroy—an urge that is not wholly accounted for by hunger. The time-honoured remedy of black cotton strung through the branches is the best I have yet found. Scares have always proved useless, for familiarity of even a few days' standing has been sufficient to engender a healthy contempt on the part of the finches.

By JOHN MOORE

Origin of Species, and there was no longer *Aliquid novi ex Africa* or anywhere else. So when an ignorant farmer's boy told him that he had seen a snake with legs he begged leave to doubt the story, laughing heartily and explaining that the creature was not a snake but either a newt or a lizard. "It was very long," protested the ignorant boy. "Come, come," said the naturalist, "I don't suppose it was more than six inches!" The boy shook his head and went sadly away. The years went by, the naturalist grew older and wiser, and it came to pass that one day as he was walking he encountered another ignorant country youth who declared that he had seen a snake with legs. "Ah," said the naturalist, "A newt, perhaps—" and then he hesitated. "Where did you see it?" he asked.

"In the farm-yard. It's still there."

The old man followed the boy to the farm-yard, and when he got there he saw a snake with legs. It was, he says, an anatomist's nightmare; it was enough to make a Darwinian think he had D.T.; for it lay there in the bright sunshine of high noon, a large grass snake with two sizeable legs which moved feebly and actually propelled it for an inch or two while he watched. He looked more closely at those legs and then he recognised them at once; for with the aid of such webbed feet he had studied *ad nauseam* the circulation of the blood during his medical-student days. They were the legs of a frog.

It must have been a large and exceptionally powerful frog. Having been swallowed whole, and feeling no doubt as terrified as Jonah in the belly of the whale, it had struggled so fiercely that it had pushed two of its legs through the snake's oesophagus whence they protruded like two oars pulled by slaves in a galley, dragging the moribund snake along.

"So you see," says the old naturalist, "how unwise it is for a scientific man to be too cocksure. There is a thing called philosophical doubt, which is admirable, but it should be diluted with courtesy, curiosity and credulity in equal proportions. I was discourteous to that farmer's boy, forty odd years ago, and I hope he'll forgive me for it; and if I had been more curious and a bit more credulous I should have been a better naturalist than I am." Then he adds, with a mischievous smile, "In my old age I am moving, I think, in the direction of fundamentalism; for I no longer find anything inherently improbable in the story of Jonah and the Whale."

TO SWITZERLAND BY CAR

By J. EASON GIBSON

WHILE carrying out tests of the new Healey car (as described in the last issue), during a recent visit to the Continent, I obtained much information of value about road, hotel and general conditions. For those who feel that our present austere life is one from which to escape whenever possible, I can think of few tonics to equal a motoring tour in Switzerland.

To enjoy the country to the full, and to get to know the people who live there, a car is certainly the ideal means, but for those who prefer to reach Switzerland either by rail or air there are excellent hire-car services available, many of the cars in use being British.

While in Switzerland I covered practically the entire country, missing only that part that lies south of a line drawn from Martigny, along the Rhône valley, to the Furka Pass, and then east to Liechtenstein. Not only were long fast runs done on the good main roads, but secondary and minor roads also were tried. Our principal stopping-places were Zurich, Basle, Berne and Geneva, but from each of these centres extended excursions were made into the surrounding countryside. As a centre for touring during the spring or summer, my choice would be either Berne or Zurich. Of these, Berne is, I would say, the more typically Swiss, while Zurich can offer the advantages of being truly cosmopolitan. Both Basle and Geneva suffer, as motor-touring centres, from being tucked away in corners, so that much time would be wasted covering the same roads more than once. I found the roads in an excellent state of repair throughout the country, and the standard set by the sign-posting is one we might well copy at home.

Petrol is unrationed, and a very good grade of alcohol fuel is available everywhere at 3s. 9d. per gallon. The deficiencies of our own pool petrol are well known, though by now we are

almost accustomed to the incessant pinking that accompanies any effort to use our car's performance to the maximum. The fuel in France, which must contain a large admixture of kerosene, is even worse, so the pleasure to be got from driving again on a clean and efficient fuel can be imagined. The garages struck me as being exceptional. Every workshop I inspected was an example of what it should be: polished tools neatly stored, and the operatives in clean overalls. On more than one occasion I observed clients' cars coming in for repairs, and in no case were they permitted in the workshop until the car had been thoroughly washed.

* * *

In many European countries to-day it is unwise to stray too far from the main roads, for a variety of reasons. In Switzerland I found that even on the most minor road one could be sure of finding petrol pumps and cheerful service, and, almost as important, welcoming hotels and food such as we have only dreamt of during the last seven years. On one occasion, a navigational error on the road between Basle and Berne entailed crossing the mountains by a timber haulage road. We had visions, momentary but none the less unpleasant, of missing the large midday meal to which we had by now become accustomed; but a stop at a *gasthaus* in a tiny hamlet produced a meal worthy of the hungriest of men—which we were.

The only things for which coupons are required are soap and restaurant meals. Coupons for both are provided by the authorities at the frontier, and further supplies can always be obtained through one's hotel. There appear to be unlimited supplies of cigarettes and tobacco, and at prices much lower than those in force at home. Many people will probably find it better to stay at an hotel that caters only for bed and *petit déjeuner*, for then one feels freer to explore. The present currency restrictions need not prove a barrier to enjoyment. If, for example, a party of three shares all expenses, it should easily be possible to enjoy a minimum stay of a fortnight in Switzerland with a standard of luxury unknown in Britain to-day.

For those interested in motoring sport, there are several events due to be held in Switzerland this season. The principal events are: the Grand Prix at Berne in June, the Maloja hill-climb in July, the Montreux hill-climb in August and the Grand Prix at Zurich in September. All these events are listed in the International Calendar, and when I was in Berne I inspected and drove round the circuit, which is in splendid condition.

* * *

An excellent service, little known to visitors, although of great use to them, is available on any telephone throughout Switzerland. By dialling eleven one obtains an accurate weather forecast, for any particular area, covering the next 24 hours. The value of this service when touring can be imagined. On one occasion when I utilised it we were having

severe mist and fog in Zurich, but the magic number told me at what height the sun could be found; a moment's work with a map and we were on our way to Trübsee and there spent the day above the clouds, in brilliant sunshine.

It is, of course, wise to study the various road signs before motoring in any foreign country, but there are two in use in Switzerland which cause some confusion to British motorists. These are the signs before guarded and unguarded level crossings. The sign for the guarded crossing is a white triangular plate with a red border, containing a simple drawing of a gate. For the unguarded crossing the sign is of the same style and colouring, but contains a simple drawing of an engine. At crossings which are unguarded great care should be taken.

* * *

The one real problem about visiting Switzerland is, that unless it is carefully planned in advance, the journey across France may entail a certain degree of discomfort and inconvenience. In view of the present shortage of good hotels on long stretches of main road, particularly in what were the main battle areas, it is essential to cross to France on a morning boat so that one may get out of the war-damaged areas before night. If one is travelling by the direct route from Calais to Basle, via Belfort and Mulhouse, suitable stopping-places will be found at St. Quentin and Châlon-sur-Saône. If the crossing to Dieppe has been used the most convenient halts will probably be in the Paris area and at Avallon. It should be noted that, at present, the Dieppe boat runs in accordance with the tides, as the harbour has not yet been fully dredged; so full enquiries should be made before booking a passage. At the end of March the S.S. *Forde* will restart the Dover-Calais car ferry, on which it will be permissible to travel with a full petrol tank. This service will arrive at Calais at 1 p.m. Personally I would advise against using the direct route through Belfort and Mulhouse. Although the shortest in mileage, it is neither the quickest nor the most pleasant, for the roads in the Vosges mountains and in the Mulhouse area slow one down considerably and make driving rather a task.

My personal preference would be to cross by the Dover-Calais route, and then travel comfortably to the Paris area for the night. Even better than staying in Paris is to stop for the night at one of the many good hotels to be found outside the city, for example in the Fontainebleau area. Apart from the fact that prices will be more reasonable, the welcome and the standard of service will be found to approach more closely to those of pre-war France. With not too late a start next morning, and following route N6, (sometimes called the best-fed road in France), one can easily reach Avallon for lunch. From here there are two alternative routes: either by way of Besançon and Pontarlier, and so into Switzerland by the Neuchâtel road; or carrying on down N6 to Macon, and then to Bourg to Geneva.

* * *

Should a night be spent in Paris or a problem has to be considered if one's time-table is not to be disorganised completely. At the moment, owing to the electricity shortage, the current is cut off in certain districts each day and it is essential to make sure that one's garage has other means of extricating cars than by an electric lift.

Finally, on disembarking at the French port, it is as well to call immediately on the official responsible for the issue of petrol coupons, as very often his supplies are limited. Should you be one of the unfortunate ones compelled to start the journey with less than the full allocation of coupons, additional supplies can always be obtained from a local petrol office on your route. Full and up-to-date details of these offices can be had from either the R.A.C. or the A.A., and the chief petrol office in Paris will also be found very helpful.



IN OBWALDEN, BETWEEN ENGELBERG AND THE JOCH PASS

PHOTOGRAPHING THE MARSH-WARBLER

By S. H. COOKE

The following article is contributed by a fifteen-year-old boy at one of our public schools. We are glad to publish it, and congratulate him on his interesting observations on one of the most attractive and least photographed of British birds.

—ED. "C. L."

THE reed-warbler is fairly widely distributed in this country, but the closely related marsh-warbler has a very restricted distribution. The *Handbook of British Birds* states that it is known to breed regularly only in the following counties:—Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Somerset, Dorset, Sussex and Kent, and that its occurrence in other parts of the British Isles is very sporadic and infrequent. When, therefore, last summer the marsh-warbler turned up in Wiltshire, I determined to obtain photographs of the nest, eggs and young, if possible.

In appearance the marsh-warbler is very similar indeed to the reed-warbler, so much so that an acknowledged expert hesitates to say which is which by sight alone. The songs, however, provide a clear distinction; that of the marsh-warbler is of great range and tunefulness, and the bird is a great mimic of other birds, while that of the reed-warbler has a much more restricted range, and the bird mimics other birds to a limited extent only.

It was as a result of this habit of mimicking the songs of other birds that our Wiltshire marsh-warbler was discovered. Walking beside an overgrown water-meadow in a Wiltshire valley, an observer heard coming from a group of trees snatches of the songs of blackbird, thrush, skylark, swallow, greenfinch, chaffinch and reed-bunting, all poured out one after another in that order, with stretches of an exceptionally vigorous and brilliant song. It was clear that all these birds could not be in hiding in the one group of trees, and the observer's interest was at once aroused. He was soon rewarded by a clear sight of the bird, which confirmed his suspicions. A marsh-warbler had been seen in Wiltshire again; the last report of one for this county was in 1922.

Last year's bird was first seen on May 29, but I did not see it until June 18. On that day I sat for about an hour on the gate at the entrance to the field where I knew the bird had been seen before. This field was overgrown with nettles, butterbur, meadow-sweet, marsh-thistles, and a variety of reeds. At length I saw the small brown marsh-warbler journeying to and from a clump of reeds. With my binoculars I could see that it was carrying pieces of dry grass in its beak.

Three days later I approached closer to the spot where I imagined the nest to be. Moving forward carefully, I parted the reeds and found the nest completed, but without eggs. It was slung between a stem of meadow-sweet and a reed stem by "basket-handles." Here was more evidence in support of our identification of the bird as a marsh-warbler, for the "basket-handles" slinging the nest between only two supports are a distinctive feature of that species' nest. This nest was built of dry grass, a little moss and the seeds of dock; it was oval in shape and tapered off underneath. The main weight of it was taken by the meadow-sweet stem, the basket-handle on one side being supported by a side branch of the stalk.

On June 22 the first egg was laid, grey-white with blotches of a darker grey. By June 30 four had been laid. I stood near the

nest and the hen went back and forth from it, while the cock sang one or two snatches of song from among the willows just behind the clump of reeds in which it was situated. Neither bird seemed to be disturbed by my presence. During the next week I gathered together the materials required for constructing a hide from which to photograph the nest.

The date fixed for the photography was July 13. I took a schoolfellow with me to help to carry the gear. We arrived at the nest at about 4.30 p.m. and at once set up the hide and camera. After we had parted the reeds carefully I concealed myself in the hide while my companion walked back to the gate leading into the field in order to make the birds think that there was no one in the hide. Almost as soon as he was out of sight the thrilling moment arrived as one of the birds came quickly forward to the nest and perched there less than a yard in front of my peep-hole. It clung to the supporting reed-stem, fed the young, and then darted away in

nest, raising and lowering his head-feathers and fluffing out his throat-feathers. The hen seemed more upset at the presence of the hide than did the cock. While the cock fed the young, she spent a good deal of the time in scolding the hide while sulking in the reeds a foot or two behind the nest.

The excretion of the young was grey in colour and was carried away from the nest by the parent birds. This I witnessed three times during my spell in the hide. Once the cock took away the excrement without first feeding the young. Once or twice the parent birds inspected the hide within a foot of my face. I could always tell when a parent bird was coming by seeing the tops of the reeds sway under its weight as it approached the nest. The parent birds never fed the young after flying direct to the nest. The hen fed the young and then stayed for a longer time than the cock. She spent much of the time peering into the nest. More than once I saw both parents approaching



THE YOUNG MARSH-WARBLERS CRANE THEIR NECKS EXPECTANTLY AS THE COCK ARRIVES AT THE NEST. (Right) THE HEN SPENT MUCH TIME PEERING INTO THE NEST

the direction from which it had come through the reeds behind the nest.

During the time I was in the hide the parent birds only once used the meadow-sweet stem as a support when feeding the young, and never sat on the edge of the nest while doing so. After the young birds had flown the nest was examined and it was found that it could be moved up and down comparatively easily on the one side by the "basket-handle" slipping over the reed-stem support. Many times it was blown by the wind to acute angles to the vertical. When this happened, the young crouched down in the bottom of it. They also did so when direct sunlight shone on them.

In the first hour of my watch the parent birds visited the nest only four times. I became just as impatient as the young birds, which stretched out their necks and opened their beaks whenever the wind blew the nest slightly from side to side. When the parent birds did come and go they moved very rapidly indeed. I managed to obtain some good views of them, however, and noticed their brown colouring, white throats and slender, flesh-coloured legs and feet.

Gradually the visits grew more frequent—eventually as many as three in five minutes. The food brought to the young consisted mostly of small adult insects, but once the cock brought a small green caterpillar. On one occasion the cock stayed a little longer than usual at the

nest, but they never both came to the nest at the same time.

When the young were six days old they were still very ugly. They made a few almost inaudible squeaks when they were about to be fed, and once or twice they uttered a slight squawk when they were impatient with waiting for the parent birds to come and feed them. The noise of the shutter of my camera disturbed them, and when I made an exposure the parent birds moved rapidly away from the nest and waited, watching the hide.

Later I had trouble with my camera (the winding-on gear jammed) so I had to pack up for that day and return to school to open the camera in a dark-room and make the necessary adjustments. I left the hide up in position by the nest, intending to continue taking photographs the next day. But the next day it rained, and in the end I was compelled to dismantle the hide and to abandon the idea of taking more photographs.

While standing near the nest after I had taken down the hide I saw the hen feed the young three times, apparently quite unafraid and tame, and the cock uttered a good burst of song from a spot near by, with its beak full of food for the young. The young flew on July 20. They were seen twice after that, and both times they were trying to balance on the reed stems with the aid of their short, stubby tails.



PAINTED STAIRCASES

at 8, Clifford Street and 76,
Dean Street, London

By CHRISTOPHER HUSSEY

Photographs by
Dr. F. Gernsheim

Thomas Walker, creator of the part of Macheath in The Beggar's Opera, was first occupant (1729) of the former; Captain John Hamilton, R.N. (1735), of the latter.

IT is rare to find important Georgian mural paintings intact in private, or what were private, houses in London. A good if small example was destroyed when 11, Bedford Row was bombed. Portions of the staircase painted by Hogarth for his father-in-law, Sir James Thornhill's house, 75, Dean Street, have been in the Victoria and Albert Museum since the house was demolished in 1913. One of the two now illustrated is in the house adjoining the site of Thornhill's, and that master or a pupil of his Academy was, I think, the painter of the staircase of 8, Clifford Street, Bond Street.

This house, of which the first occupant was the creator of the part of Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera*, Thomas Walker, faces down Old Burlington Street, and gives little indication outside of its magnificent contents. It has lost its front door, the ground floor is, or was, a tea shop, and is occupied as offices by J. Lyons and Co., by whose courtesy these photographs were taken. Savile Row and the adjoining streets were laid out on the land behind and belonging to Burlington House between 1717 and 1733. Many of the houses were designed by the Earl's architects,



1.—8, CLIFFORD STREET. Ceiling of staircase

Leoni, Campbell, Flitcroft, Kent, and by his lordship himself. Miss Bishop, City Archivist, informs me that the Westminster Rate Books give the earliest occupants of the Clifford Street house (originally No. 6) as Thomas Walker, Esq. (1729); Stephen Skinner Esq. (1749); Lord Pomfret (1770).

Thomas Walker, aged 30 in 1729, had been making a reputation in tragedy and comedy at Drury Lane since 1715. Macheath, however, was his greatest original part, for which Gay no doubt selected him on account of his dashing appearance and the fact, as Rich said, that he was the only actor at that time who could both sing and speak well. His name's first appearance in the Rate Book in

1729—the year following the production of *The Beggar's Opera*, when he was at the height of his reputation—establishes that he invested some of his now large salary from Macheath and other principal and original parts in setting himself up in a new house in the most fashionable modern quarter of the town. Consequently the house must often have been visited by Gay, Lavinia Fenton, and the dramatists in whose plays he subsequently acted, including Fielding, Madden, and Mrs. Haywood, besides the young men of fashion who courted him and encouraged him in the dissipations that led to his ruin and premature death in 1744.

The occurrence of his cypher T.W. in an angle of the coved ceiling of the painted staircase makes it clear that he commissioned this decoration even if he did not, as he well may, have the house built.

The entrance gives direct into the staircase hall in which the ascent begins in the opposite right hand corner and doubles back along the east wall and over the entrance. The stairs (Fig. 6) are of stone, with very rich wrought iron balustrade and a panelled dado, grained walnut picked out with gilding, above which the walls and ceiling are painted in oil colours direct on the plaster.

The colouring is bistre monochrome, lightened with gold. The design consists of simple architectural treatment up to first floor level, serving as base for Corinthian pilasters dividing the space above into compartments and supporting a modillioned cornice in the cove, on which a dome is



2.—EAST WALL OF STAIRCASE, 8, Clifford Street



3.—DETAIL OF A MEDALLION BETWEEN THE PILASTERS

represented with four arches on its sides containing this (Fig. 1). The two main compartments between the pilasters on the east and west walls are each filled by a large roundel within a wreath. That on the east (Fig. 2) is supported by Michaelangelsque titans crouching on Baroque scrolls and encouraged by artistic putti—I mean, each infant holds some emblem of the visual arts. On the west wall (Fig. 5) there is not space for the titans, but there is a delightful group of putti symbolising sculpture and engraving (Fig. 4). The roundels depict with much vigour episodes connected with Artemis, perhaps as representing triumph by night (west wall, Fig. 5), and, I take it, Aphrodite on the east wall, while Athene the wise and witty presides from a niche in the north wall. The narrower spaces between



5.—WEST WALL OF STAIRCASE



4.—ARTISTIC PUTTI, BELOW ROUNDEL ON WEST WALL. The painting of the staircase is attributed to the School of Sir James Thornhill, 1729

6.—THE FOOT OF THE STAIRCASE, 8, CLIFFORD STREET

the pilasters contain gold arabesques with further emblematic medallions (Fig. 3).

The general treatment and handling of the figures suggests to me the secondary decorative parts of some of Thornhill's larger works—parts that may sometimes have been painted for him by an assistant. In 1728-29 Thornhill had recently completed murals at Moor Park, over the payment for which he had a lawsuit with Styles, the owner, and was copying the Raphael Cartoons at Hampton Court. He also had a band of pupils at his Academy in Old Queen Street. That he made use of the Academy for his own purposes is shown by the story (told by Whitley) of Thornhill's getting Gibson, then Assistant Governor of the Academy, to pose and draw models in attitudes required by him for figures in the Painted Hall ceiling at Greenwich. Had the muscular titans in Fig. 2 a similar origin?

This important and historic decoration has considerably deteriorated since these photographs were recently taken. The ceiling has almost perished and there is a large crack in the east wall.

No. 76, Dean Street has been occupied for a century by Messrs. Joseph Clark and Sons, Ltd., leather merchants. The Rate Books show that the houses on the west side between Richmond Buildings and Meard Street were small and of low rateable value till 1728, vacant in 1729, not assessed 1730-32,

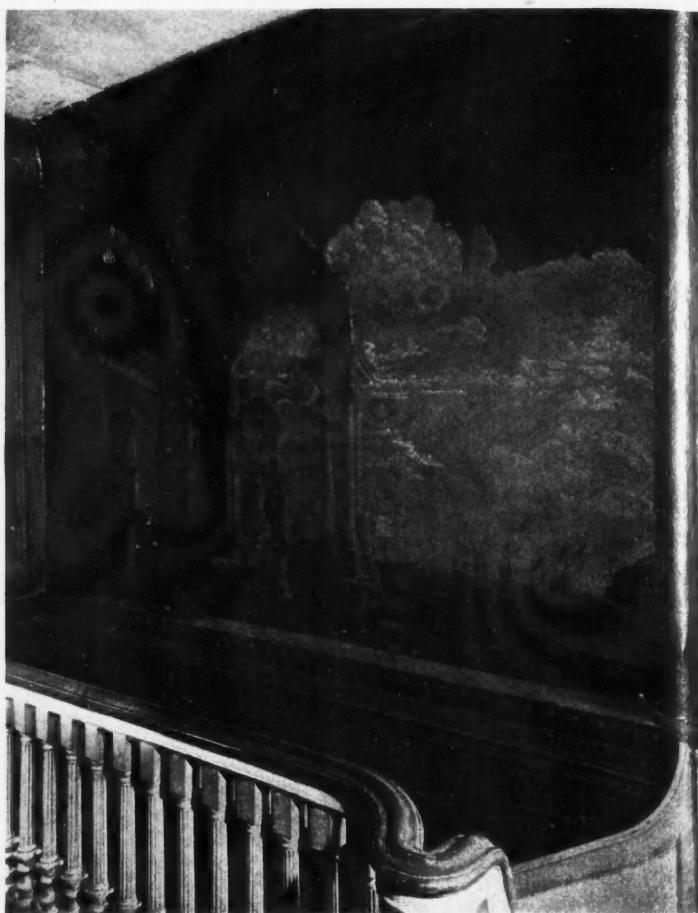


7.—76, DEAN STREET. FOOT OF STAIRCASE

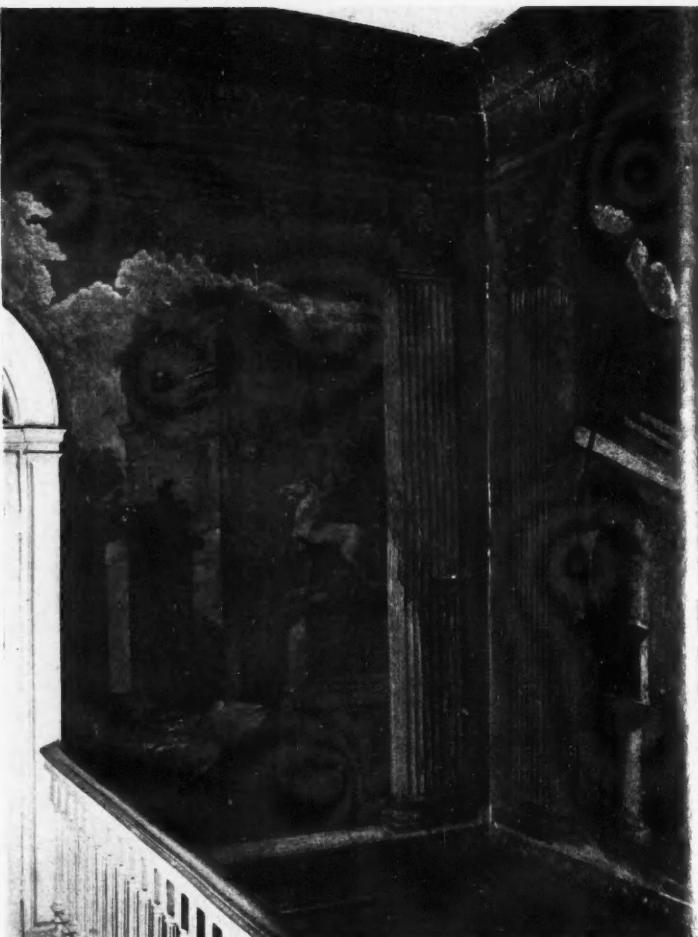
and had probably therefore been pulled down. At Christmas, 1735, No. 76 reappears as a large house in the name of James Hamilton, (7th) Earl of Abercorn, F.R.S.

The mid-Georgian front and panelled interior are well preserved, and the painting of the staircase hall is remarkable as containing maritime scenes. The stairs themselves are admirable solid carpentry (Fig. 7), and the lower part of the walls is rendered in brown channelled masonry. Above a painted cornice occur Roman ruins beyond which, on the north wall, lies a fleet at anchor (Fig. 8). The south (landing) wall has received a later dado which covers the lower part of the hull of a line of battleship seen against a windy sky (Fig. 11). The late Sir Geoffrey Callendar, to whom I showed the photograph, described this painting as in a class by itself and well worthy of study, the vessel as probably of early 18th-century build, but made no suggestion of the artist. The whole decoration is a little crude, the large ship almost certainly by a different hand from the other walls.

There can hardly have been a direct connection between these unusually nautical scenes and the seventh Earl of Abercorn, an authority on magnetism and fellow author of a treatise



8.—MARITIME SCENE ON NORTH WALL, 76, DEAN STREET



9.—ROMAN RUINS ON WEST WALL

on harmony with Dr. Pepusch (who handled the musical side of *The Beggar's Opera*, and thus provides a link with 8, Clifford Street). Besides, Lord Abercorn died, presumably at his own house, in Cavendish Square. But his second son, John, was a sailor, promoted lieutenant in March, 1736, who in the following December greatly distinguished himself by his gallantry in the wreck of the *Louisa*, lost while she was escorting George II from Hanover. Presumably the Earl took a lease of No. 76 for his promising naval son, and had the staircase painted with appropriate maritime scenes. Then John Hamilton had the landing wall adorned, possibly by Peter Monamy, with one of his ships, perhaps the ill-fated *Louisa*. He is described as a man of rare humour and originality. At his suggestion the 40-gun *Kinsale* was fitted with canvas screens instead of bulkheads for the cabins, and thereby enabled to carry heavier armament than was usual, an innovation repeated for him in the *Augusta*, 60 guns, in 1743. According to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, his humour bubbles up in his official letters, as in one that he had occasion to write in the *Augusta* complaining of the marines' clothing. He begged their Lordships to "examine the enclosed pattern which, with great management, I have contrived to cut off, fresh and



11.—LINE OF BATTLESHIP ON SOUTH STAIRCASE WALL



10.—ENTRANCE, 76, DEAN STREET

entire. . . . They (the marines) are miserably accoutred and, properly speaking, miserably fleeced. They really put me in mind hourly of Sir John Falstaff's recruits." This fine officer was drowned in 1755 when his long-boat, returning to the *Lancaster* at Spithead, overturned on striking the tail of the shoal since known as Hamilton's Shoal. His posthumous son was eventually the first Marquess of Abercorn.

Meanwhile (1742) he was succeeded at No. 76 by a certain Jonathan Cope, Esq. Neither his name nor Hamilton's explains the riddle presented by the fine marble chimney-piece, with Kentian overmantel, in the first-floor front room, and in the frieze of which is an admirably sculptured relief (Fig. 12). It represents the well-known legend of the Stanley family (perpetuated in their crest) of the finding of an infant heir in an eagle's nest, whither the raptor had carried it in its cradle.

The room, proudly cherished, to-day contains noble rolls of hide, the pungent smell of which pervades the house. That at the back is still the proprietors' parlour (Fig. 13) and maintains unchanged its character, with portraits and furniture, of the time when the Clark family "lived over their business."



12.—RELIEF OF THE STANLEY LEGEND. Chimney-piece medallion in first-floor front room



13.—THE PARLOUR, 76, DEAN STREET

A PAINTER OF THE UNDERWORLD

By DENYS SUTTON

TOULOUSE-LAUTREC was one of the most fascinating personalities of an age that abounded in curious characters, and, as his posters and lithographs recently on exhibition at the Redfern Gallery in Cork Street, W., revealed, his art has lost none of its vitality and appeal. He was one of those curious painters who arrive without predecessors and depart without leaving followers, unless it be, in his instance, the early Picasso. His work reflected much of the spirit of his age, yet the twist he gave it was singular and individual. By birth an aristocrat, he had no need to care for public opinion or to seek support for his ideas. The impregnability of his position was important, perhaps, in determining the direction of his art; it enabled him to paint with superb self-confidence and gave him, as it were, an essential objectivity. He was always the spectator, immersed, but not involved, in the scenes he chose to record.

He made no concessions to current tastes or to convention. Though he sometimes painted racehorses and outdoor scenes, his major theme was the relationship of man to his environment. He was the faithful guide to the subterranean life of Paris, to that underworld which fascinated and tempted so many writers and painters of the period. For all the freshness and vivacity of his colour, his paintings always suggest the hectic, hot-house atmosphere of night life. The curtains are, we feel, shut against the daylight, and the hiss of the gas lamps can be heard. He is the artist of the interior—not the sunlit rooms of Bonnard or Matisse, but the flushed excited scenes of the *cabaret* and the *bistrot*. His is a world that lives from dusk to dawn.

He viewed this curious world with a fixed and determined attention. The dancers, *demi-mondaines*, bullies, jockeys and coachmen who crowd his canvases neither shocked nor particularly amused him; they had their natural, inevitable place in society, and as a result were recorded in his work. None has rivalled him as a chronicler of the amusements of Paris. At one moment he could describe the intense concentration of Jane Avril in the midst of her dance, or the delicious May Belfort, or the predatory glances of the men and women at the *Moulin Rouge*; on another occasion he could suggest the sudden relaxation of the dancer after her number or the yawn of the professional amuser stifled by a laugh.

Lautrec's art formed part perhaps of the

reaction against the imposition of middle-class standards upon life. In his passionate interest in the bizarre and the eccentric he was very much of his age. Yet, though many of his contemporaries shared his attitude, he was alone in his refusal to compromise. He was determined to paint what he saw, what interested him, and what he knew best. In England, Beardsley had assuaged a taste for morbidity by translating his thoughts into a representation of the manners of another period; Lautrec looked at what lay around him. His attitude had in it very little of the dilettante or the dandy. He was a realist, though as one of his friends well said, he was never imprisoned by reality. We do not feel with his work, as we are inclined to do with Octave Mirbeau's extraordinary *Journal d'Une Femme de Chambre*, that the realism is distorted to achieve the effect.

Lautrec, though subjecting his themes to the necessary translation into artistic terms, never obtruded his own personality. His realism was natural and unadulterated. His art reflects no desire on the part of the cripple to find compensation; it has no sadism about it, not even satire. It shows simply the desire of a man of the world, who had no surprises left and few illusions, to leave a record of a fascinating and interesting side of humanity. *Le vrai artiste*, Tristan Bernard once wrote of him, *ne travaille pas dans un tour d'ivoire. Il se promène à travers l'existence sous le déguisement de son aspect physique, sa personnalité gardant l'inconnu.*

The sharpness of Lautrec's vision was paralleled by the intensity and directness of his art. One of the most vehement



(Right)
POSTERS

(Left)
MLLE. MARCELLE
LENDER
(a lithograph)



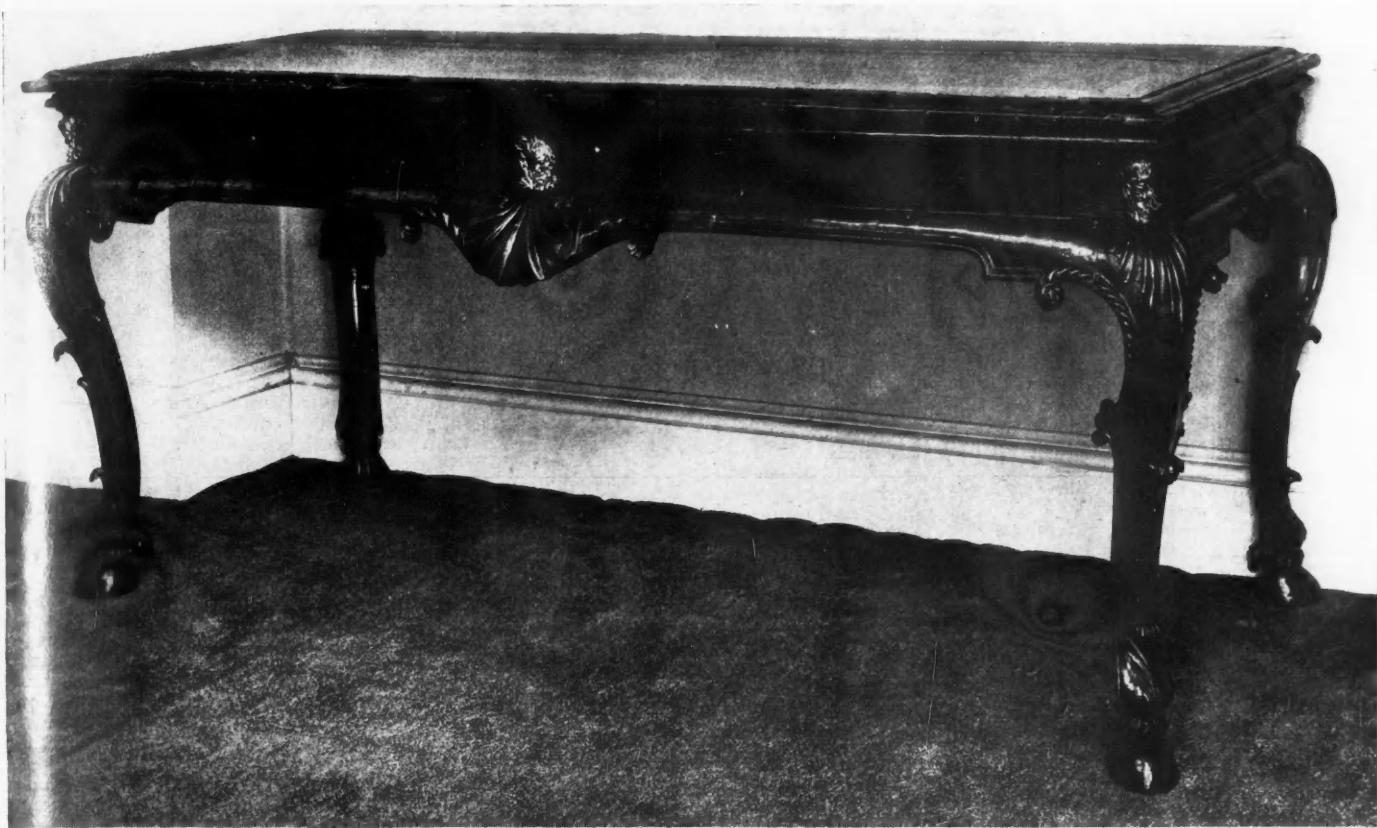
of draughtsmen, he had the power of being able to suggest the depths of a character in a scurry of lines, in a rapid sketch. But he could not only assess character, he could discover the artistic possibilities of a subject. He was one of the few artists for whom the subject was important, not as an excuse for anecdote, but as an inspiration. His ability to contrast and to juxtapose colours was considerable. He was, as the Redfern Gallery exhibition illustrated, a master designer of posters. In his *Divan Japonais*, for instance, the superb contrasts of

black, yellow and orange are offset by the evocative power of the black gloves which suggest the personality of the singer. We receive an exquisite sense of understanding the characters involved, as well as a satisfaction from the exact placing of the figures and the rhythmic notes of the composition.

"Dites ce que vous avez à dire," said Lautrec to one of his friends. That is what he himself so well succeeded in doing. Courageously, relentlessly and gently, he enshrined in the superb freshness of his paint, in the strict impartiality of his line, the image of the fascinating, half-legendary Paris of the 'nineties. This world of tinsel and of glitter will live in our memory by reason of the personality and vitality of Lautrec.

A KENSINGTON PALACE TABLE

By R. W. SYMONDS



THE world has many hiding-places for works of art. A painting by an old master sometimes makes its appearance in the market after it has lain undetected and unvalued for perhaps a hundred or more years since last it was recorded. With furniture, owing to its bulk, this event is less frequent, but still many collectors have experienced the luck of finding the companion to a table or looking-glass of which they already possess a single specimen. The table illustrated is an example of a long-lost table again coming to light. In Buckingham Palace is a table of exactly similar design that originally came from Kensington Palace. In Pyne's *Royal Residences* there is a plate of the Queen's Gallery at Kensington Palace which depicts four of these tables standing against the wall. Mr. Clifford Smith in his book *Buckingham Palace* comments on the extant table and mentions that the whereabouts of the other three are unknown. There seems very little doubt that the table illustrated, which is identical (except for the small metal mounts of a design of a grotesque mask decorating the frieze) to the Buckingham Palace example, is one of these missing tables.

When and for what reason this table left the royal possession and where it has been for so long undiscovered are questions that are likely never to be answered. The design of the table with its elegant curved legs, with carved ornament in high relief, and terminating in hoof feet, suggests a date of the reign of George I. On reference to the Royal Wardrobe Accounts it appears that there were many items supplied by the royal cabinet-makers for Kensington in that monarch's reign.

John Gumley and James Moore, who were the cabinet-makers to the Crown at this period, were possibly the makers of these tables, although in their bills in the Royal Wardrobe Accounts there appears no item that from its description would allow it to be identified as relating to them.

Although in Pyne's drawing of the Queen's Gallery there are only four tables shown—three on one side of the central chimneypiece and one on the other—there were possibly six; three on each side of the chimneypiece, as Pyne's view did not take in the entire length of the gallery.

It is more likely that the omission of the metal mounts in the Buckingham Palace table are due to their removal than that the mounts on the table illustrated are later additions. The cabriole leg terminating in a hoof foot is similar in character to the legs of the contemporary walnut chair which was described as having an "India back."

Gumley and Moore supplied walnut and japan furniture and numerous looking-glasses to Kensington Palace between the years 1715 and 1726. The following are a few of the most interesting items taken from their bills that relate to Kensington: 1718. For fitting up all the walnuttree and inlaid work that was brought from Windsor being much out of repair. £9.

1721. for a Wallnuttree Desk & Book Case wth pillars £10 For a large Wallnuttree Scrutoire for his Maties Great Closet £27 for a very large hanging Glass in a Glass Frame for Ditto Closet £120

1722. for a fine Ombre Table lined wth green Velvett & trimed wth gold Lace & gilt nailes And two Ditto's lined wth green Cloth for his Maty's Service £15

1723. For 4 Large gilt Lustres at £25 Each £100

On the death of James Moore in 1726—he died owing to injuring his head by a fall while walking in the street—William Turing succeeded to his place of cabinet-maker to the Crown with John Gumley.

WALNUT TABLE WITH MARBLE TOP IDENTIFIED AS ONE OF FOUR FORMERLY IN THE QUEEN'S GALLERY, KENSINGTON PALACE. Attributed to John Gumley and James Moore, cabinet-makers to George I



DETAIL OF CORNER AND LEG

A MID-WINTER'S TALE

By MARJORIE SCOTT JOHNSTON

CARAVANNING in mid-winter is madmen's delight. You have to be driven demented by the housing shortage and the negatives of the local authority to attempt it. We have been driven demented; it is not an unpleasant feeling. Outside this tin and plywood box, as I write, the east wind howls, "the whaups are crying," a quarter of a mile of knee-high snow lies between us and all mankind, there is condensation freezing, as inside a refrigerator, on the inside corners of our roof. In spite of the delightful fug we have created, there is a four-inch icicle hanging in the little wall cupboard we use as a dressing table. Very amusing—so long as it doesn't thaw. But it will, one day.

Under these conditions, priority goes to keeping warm. It is surprisingly possible. We tell anxious friends who are writing daily like expectant heirs that our grandmothers were Esquimaux, and anyway the technique of the high Alpine hut, acquired in happier days, can now be put to practical use. We are not bothered by gas and electricity cuts; we have only three feet of water-pipe to cherish. Compared with those of the city dweller, the sharer of other people's kitchens and bathrooms, our blessings amount to a satisfactory total.

* * *

Blessings. To experience the profundity of epicurian delight, one must abstain for a while. "Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet." Try washing in a small basin for a week, and then go to a hotel, or a friend's house, and soak yourself in a hot bath up to the chin. Life has few pleasanter sensations. It does not appear to be within human capacity to derive deep enjoyment from habitual pleasures. (My husband gets bored with trout. He once had it every day for three months. Boiled, fried, grilled, curried, devilled—one could die of a surfeit of cream).

Or from habitual sights. In the city one's eyes grow glassy, myopic, red-veined. They sink into the skull. The dead grey stalks and tangled willow branches in the marsh below us are reborn for a new, illuminating moment, transfigured with an evanescent loveliness. Here is a backcloth for *The Snow Queen* more full of artifice, more cunning than Bakst or Massine at their most fantastic. Alongside is the main road, unfamiliar white and broadened, and tinged with the pale blue and violet shadows that properly belong to high snowfields just after sunrise.

This vision, bursting like a celestial star-shell on the unexpected mind, holds many memories, but now we have only to step outside. It lies all around us; it does not have to be deliberately sought on holidays and at weekends. Our eyes come forward again and find excitement. In this greater simplicity of living, we have discovered a new world, or, perhaps, we have rediscovered the old world.

* * *

Yet, this simple life is not as simple as it might appear to one coming upon us dressed in slacks and many jerseys which in smarter, coupon-free days we should have given to tramps, and eating bread and cheese and onions; or as it may be to the mobile, summer-holiday caravanner whose simplicities are really simple because they exist for an arbitrary and voluntary period only. We, trying to farm 14 acres of land without so much as a broken-down barn in which to put a camp-bed and a brazier, find the days much too short for all that has to be done in the caravan alone. For instance, it is hardly credible that it takes as long to put a box, 16 feet by 6 ft. 3 ins., to rights in the morning as it took to dress a comparatively large London flat. Here everything overlaps. It is a Chinese box, with the kitchen inside the dining-room, the bathroom inside the kitchen, the bedroom overflowing the kitchen, and the sitting-room enclosing all. One does not waste much time walking from one room to another, and what you have forgotten to bring with you you can stretch out

your arm and reach. But there are physical convolutions involved. One cannot move fast or clumsily, or without previous thought. Two people cannot be within the same box at the same time. One acquires perfect elegance and precision of movement. Otherwise, disaster. And it seems possible to mislay a letter or a key or other vital object more successfully in a small space than in a large one.

* * *

There are, in fact, at least three different types of caravanner. There is the prototype—the nomadic gypsy who, like the snail, carries his home more or less whither he will—a jaunty Rococo home singing of the South and the East, of fairs and of canal barges, whose exterior, at least, condemns the modern, streamlined, lozenge-shaped trailer for the sham it is. I always stare at those exuberant shanties on wheels as they pass with their dingy, but sometimes proud and gay, and always strangely foreign inhabitants. Though it is, perhaps, social, and certainly quite usual, in England to condemn them as useless unwashed vagabonds, surely they have a point of view of some value in this age of uniformity. They are rebels; they are anarchic. If only we were not so supercilious about them, if only we would listen to the voice that speaks in their music (seeds whose flowers are a Granados, a de Falla, a Kodaly, a Liszt) and observe with humility the way a gypsy woman wears a scarf, and the colour of it. I confess I have only met one gypsy personally. He bore a famous name and had cashed in on his birthright. It seemed to me, perhaps unfairly, that he was too good to be true, that his eye was too bold, his hair too black, his eccentricities of dress too carefully conceived. There are some things one should not sell. Most gypsies sell only wild flowers and clothes pegs and kettles, and a bit of blarney to gild the pill. We, who have taken to ourselves their principal idea, wish them the good fortune they claim to see in our hands. Does the charm still work, I wonder, if one crosses

their palm with a cupro-nickel coin? How degenerate has our alchemy become.

Secondly, there is the holiday caravanner. I have never indulged in this kind of holiday. Its advantages are too obvious to enumerate, but, for a housewife, it involves too many chores, and one cannot take a van to the shores of Loch Coruisk, or up a glacier, or even cross the Sty Head Pass in one. *Chacun à son goût.*

Then there is our kind—the caravanner *de nécessité*—inhabitants of a utility lozenge masquerading as a temporary "prefab" for those who are not eligible for government houses and not rich enough to pay £4,000 for a cottage worth £800. We had to pay nearly £800 for a reasonably weatherproof caravan before the Chancellor kindly took the purchase tax off this kind of housing the other day. Unfortunately, if you have a family, working life as a caravanner would not be tolerable unless you had two caravans, or a weatherproof shed into which to overflow. In which case, better wait for some sort of house. A caravan, winter or summer, is a *pis aller*, anyway. We have built ourselves a shed into which to overflow. It is an architect's nightmare. Some day, no doubt (for we have pessimistically built it to last) it will be labelled "quaint." At the moment it is merely invaluable.

* * *

And a van does not make a good farmhouse. There is no room to put the forms, for one thing. Perhaps, on the other hand, this is an advantage. It is, at any rate, an excuse. It may, intelligently handled, be proof against any weather, even though the only cure for condensation is a through draught, and when the east wind is blowing we prefer the condensation, or a stove which takes up about eighty per cent. of indispensable cupboard space.

As for trying to get a fruit farm started, that is another story for which one might borrow the title *Heartbreak House*. "That title from a better man I stole, Ah, how much better had I stolen the whole!"

POACHERS, OLD AND NEW

By LOUIS QUINAIN

OF late years, chiefly because of the meat ration, those who "trespass in pursuit of game and rabbits" have appeared in the village constable's note-book oftener than they did before the war. There is the poacher of tradition whose methods are older than the Police Force itself, and there is the newcomer, the professional who helps to feed the Black Market. As a policeman I have had dealings with both.

One would think that those who have been at the job longest would be the most difficult to catch. Unfortunately this is not so. The methods of the Black-Market agent are smarter and up-to-date; he may use a motor-car with false number-plates or a collapsible shotgun that is well on the way to being noiseless; while the old-timer sets out, either on foot or a pedal cycle, with his snares, nets and ferrets—perhaps even with a catapult. It is not often you see him with a gun; it attracts too much attention, especially when carried on the highway. Even with innocent sportsmen who can produce their game- and gun-licences the policeman fears that some law or other may be broken.

* * *

The first complaint I ever had about professional poachers was early in 1943. A farmer telephoned to report that half an hour earlier he had noticed someone loitering in one of his fields. The intruder was a good distance away, but, curious to know what was happening, the farmer fetched his field-glasses to watch. The man, a stranger, appeared to be shooting rabbits, yet the odd part was that each time he bowed a rabbit over there was no sound from the gun. Naturally the farmer went after him, but no sooner had he started crossing the field

than the man took his gun to pieces, tumbled them into a bag, and made off through a wood.

The incident struck me as being rather comic at the time, for it seemed that here was a poacher with original ideas. However, the events that followed made me think differently.

Now such are the poaching laws that if I had caught this man I could not have arrested him, since the job had taken place during daytime. Under the Game Act of 1831 and the Poaching Prevention Act of 1862, we have no power of arrest unless the poacher assaults us when we stop and search him, or refuses to give his name and address and to produce his game and gun-licence. We can seize any poaching implements, except dogs and ferrets, found in the poacher's possession, and then proceed against him by summons, but when a poacher is on private property we have no power to go to him on our own; we must either be accompanied by the property-owner or an employee of his, or wait until the culprit reaches the highway.

But the Night Poaching Act of 1828, under which this man was arrested later, operates differently; not only has the constable the power of arrest, but so too have the property-owner and any of his employees. They may also chase the poacher and arrest him in any place in which he may seek refuge. For the purposes of the Night Poaching Act night-time begins at the "first hour after sunset" and ends at the "beginning of the last hour after sunrise."

* * *

A few weeks later I had word from a bailiff who was in charge of some 1,000 acres that his head gamekeeper had seen two men enter a copse and that he had a pretty good idea what they were up to. The bailiff had already put severa

estate-hands to watch this copse until the police arrived.

It was late afternoon, about an hour before sunset, when I arrived at the scene with my colleague from the next village, and, though the copse was only a small one, little did we guess how long the job was going to take; as it happened this was a blessing, for had it been otherwise we should have had no powers of arrest. We hunted the copse twice without success, and it was well past the "first hour after sunset" when one of the estate-hands declared he could hear suspicious movements up a fir-tree. He was right, too! Apparently the poachers—there were two of them—as soon as they found the hunt was on, had hoped to escape by hiding a bit. After shining our torches into the tree from various angles, we at last spotted them. Very soon twigs were snapping, branches

shaking, and down they came. It was the most unusual arrest I have ever made.

Later we discovered that one of the poachers was the man whom the farmer had seen weeks previously. It was a pleasure to relieve him of the collapsible shotgun—an ingenious weapon which we had to forward immediately to Crime Bureau at headquarters. Both these men came from London and were wanted for poaching offences over a wide area. They were sentenced accordingly.

The old-time poacher is still employing the methods used by his forefathers at the time when the Night Poaching Act was passed. We know how we stand with him; and I doubt very much if he has ever been caught hiding himself up a tree after sunset. As a rule he sells his catches locally. Even so, there are occasions when it is difficult to keep upside down.

THE TRIAL TEAMS ◊ A Golf Commentary by BERNARD DARWIN

THE lists of those invited to play in the Walker Cup trial matches make very interesting reading, and everyone must congratulate the Selectors on the trouble they have evidently taken. They have cast their net very wide, for I must admit that there are seven or eight players in the list of whom—more shame to me no doubt—I had never heard, and another half-dozen or so whom I have never seen play. Several of those whose names were unknown to me, and, I suspect, to a good many other people, come from Artisan Clubs, and that is natural because they do not have many chances of playing away from home. It is all the pleasanter to see that so many of them will now get that chance of giving their proofs. If some hitherto mate, inglorious Mitchells can be found among them, so much the better for us, for it is very certain that we shall want the best that we can get.

The Selectors have chosen sixteen players with the clearest claims to ultimate consideration who are to play in the final trials at St. Andrews. In addition, they have chosen two more lots of sixteen and eighteen respectively, who will take part in preliminary trials, the Northerners, broadly speaking, at St. Andrews,

FOX

*SOMETHING'S astir in the sycamore copse.
Moving so stealthily under the trees.
Footfalls as light as a leaf when it drops.
Pattering softly, down-wind with the breeze.
Something aloof, yet a part of the glade,
Reading a way through the undergrowth rank
Lithe, with a wariness keen as a blade,
Muscles a ripple on shoulder and flank.
Something's atop of the boundary wall,
Scanning the world with a basilisk stare,
Crouching so still, might be nothing at all—
Something has vanished. Was anything there?*

EDRIC ROBERTS.

and the Southerners at Deal. Those who distinguish themselves in these two trials, will be added to the number of the elect for the final one. The first sixteen are thus like those who come into a high jump competition at, let me say, 5 ft. 6 ins., while others have been struggling over lesser heights. Or, to alter the similitude, the players in the preliminary trials are like those who go in for an examination, knowing that after the first two days a certain number will be rejected by the hard-hearted examiners, while their happier brethren go forward to a severer test and the dreaded *viva* on the last day. It should be added that the Selectors have left themselves a *locus poenitentiae* as regards certain unnamed players, whom they have deliberately left out, because they will have other opportunities of seeing them in tournaments, of which the Halford Hewitt Cup at Deal is one that comes readily to mind. Altogether the scheme appears to be a good and carefully thought out one which will commend itself to everyone.

There is not a great deal to be said about the elect sixteen, because their names are in the main those that would have occurred to anyone. It is pleasant to see four names from Ireland:

Bruen and Ewing from our victorious side of 1938; John Burke, a Walker Cup player of earlier years; and Carr, who won the Open Irish Amateur Championship at Portrush, and impressed all the good judges who saw him. Burke is comparatively venerable, having been born in 1900, but he is a strong man, and essentially a fine natural golfer, with a swing likely to serve him well for a long time, and I am glad that no excessive desire for youth has excluded him. As to many of the others, the Selectors have, as I suppose, judged to some extent by the unofficial international between England and Scotland played last autumn at Western Gailes. I saw that match and take leave humbly to agree with the Selectors' choice. The two young men from Lancashire—Ball, who was first amateur in the Open, and White, who played so well at Birkdale—both confirmed at Western Gailes the hopes formed of them earlier. The three young Scotsmen, Dewar, Wilson and Williamson, all did well there likewise, and there is one player, K. G. Thom, who, I should say, owes his place in the sixteen, and most deservedly, to Western Gailes. He had not been really convincing in the English Championship even though he reached the final, and had disappeared almost at once at Birkdale, but in this international he showed to anyone with eyes to see what a fine game he possessed both actually and potentially. Since then I believe he has been studying under Cotton at Monte Carlo, which must have been good for him. Beyond doubt there is a game in him that not many people have got, and I hope it will duly emerge in the final trials.

* * *

Now to turn to the two preliminary trials at St. Andrews. In both these lists we find the names of some who are still obviously good, but seem either to have slipped back a little or perhaps, merely through the luck of the game or the lack of opportunity, have not been quite so prominent as of old. At St. Andrews, for instance, there are Gordon Peters, one of the bright, particular stars of the 1938 team, and S. L. McKinlay, always a beautiful player and not so very old, though a member of earlier Walker Cup sides. There is D. H. R. Martin, who seemed emphatically coming back to his pre-war self in the President's Putter at Rye. There is likewise a name not very well known but which delights me, as I know it stands for good golf, that of K. T. Thomson, now of Elie, who was captain of the Cambridge side in the early '30s. I am equally glad to see in the Deal match the name of P. H. F. White, who was Thomson's foursome partner. The thought of the pair of them makes me feel colder even than usual, because I remember halving a foursome against them at Worlington on the coldest day on which I ever played golf, wearing more clothes than I had hitherto believed compatible with golf at all. Here are two good golfers.

At Deal will be two whose proofs want, so to speak, a little furbishing or renewing, A. A. Duncan and H. G. Bentley. Duncan was disappointing at Birkdale because his normally beautiful putting for once forsook him, but he played very well when last I watched him at Worplesdon, though even then he occasionally disgusted himself over a short putt. He is

I remember that once a colleague from a neighbouring village was engaged to keep observation, in plain clothes, at a certain public-house on my beat where we knew that poachers had recently made a habit of "trading." My colleague had not been stationed in the district long, so I felt sure that no one would know who he was. He spent several evenings there, but had no luck. Not long afterwards he was setting out for an early-morning patrol and found a brown paper parcel on his doorstep. Inside were a couple of rabbits, together with a note scrawled on the flap of an old cigarette packet. "A little present," the note read, "and we hope there's no offence." The message, of course, was unsigned.

Evidently one of the old-timers was smarter than we had bargained for. His last word, too, seemed a little ambiguous.

clearly one of those not to be left out except after much searching of heart, and if the job were mine—thank Heaven it isn't—I should want him, I think, at any rate for the foursomes; so excellent is his temperament and his putting. Bentley suggests himself as a possible foursome player to anyone who saw the match at St. Andrews in 1938. He was then the glue that held together the partnership with Bruen, and by halving their foursome against Fischer and Kocsis those two laid one of the foundations of victory.

However, the most exciting part of the Deal match will be for many people the first sight of the formidable Artisan contingent: Ashmore, Beacall, Sherlock, Dudley, Norman and Pratt. The first three are from the north, and two, Beacall and Sherlock, from Leasowe, not far from Hoylake, in the old days the home course of a very good player Mr. John Ball (2), as he used to be styled to distinguish him from his more illustrious cousin. The second three are from Surrey, and Norman and Dudley in particular have already made considerable names for themselves. How familiar some of them are with sea-side golf I do not know, though the two Leasowe men clearly must be. To those who

THE HARP PLAYER

*THERE in the silence, windy, wild and high
Where mountains near and distant filled the
sky—
We listened breathless—mountains, birds and I.
It was no orphean strain, no Dian's horn—
But windy melody, remote, forlorn
From thin spined branches of blown thorn-trees
torn. . . .*

*There in that high hill land the harper played—
The tree-harps trembling with the tunes he made
While clinging birds in the tall grasses swayed.*

HELEN B. G. SUTHERLAND.

have not been brought up to it, it can be a little puzzling, but to whatever kind of golf a man is accustomed, he can still swing his club well or ill. That is where it is a comfort to have Selectors who will not be too much "ladden down" by results, but will form their own opinion of the game that a candidate has in him. Results are important and not lightly to be disregarded, but they are not everything.

One very interesting player whom I should like to watch at Deal (alas that I cannot be there but shall be bathing in healing waters) is S. M. McCready of the R.A.F., who plays at Calcot, near Reading. He has, I am told, a firm style and great power and potentialities, but, as far as I know, not much public experience. Deal will certainly suit this powerful player, and it is right that it should, because unless St. Andrews has grown much faster than when I was there in September, power will be needed there with a vengeance. And so now we are "all set" for these researches, and I hope much treasure-trove will accrue to the Selectors, for they unquestionably deserve it. If there are gems of purest ray serene in the dark unfathomed caves of golf they have done their very best to find them.

CORRESPONDENCE

HAVE ANIMALS A SIXTH SENSE?

SIR.—With reference to Major C. S. Jarvis's recent remarks in COUNTRY LIFE about animals, especially dogs, possessing a sixth sense, the following experience of a friend of mine may interest your readers.

Early in 1944, before leaving England, he decided to entrust his terrier, to whom he was particularly attached, to the safe keeping of his mother in Dorset. Some months later, on September 4, after being under fire for a considerable time, he was severely wounded, and was sent home. On arrival he was told that during the day of the 4th his terrier

features that appeared in the *Sunday Times* of March 2, Major Jarvis quoted an episode involving an 18th-century application of a law limiting the number of horses to be employed in any wagon or conveyance. The following extract from *A Complete Guide for Justices of Peace: Part I, Laws relating to Justices of Peace*, by J. Bond, printed in 1687, shows the precise provisions of this statute.

"No Travelling Cart or Wagon, Carriage, wherein any burdens etc. are carried, other than such as are employed in Husbandry etc. shall go with above five Horses at length. If any draw with any greater number of Horses or Oxen, they shall draw in pairs, except one Horse, otherwise the

wagon teams that were fairly common in north Norfolk until about 1930, but never seen elsewhere. They were four-in-hand teams and unicorn teams, i.e. a pair with a single horse in the lead.

It would be interesting to know if any of your readers have seen any such teams recently.

In Wiltshire, Berkshire, parts of Hampshire and parts of Gloucestershire, farm wagons with a pair of horses abreast were common until about 15 years ago, the usual tandem being seldom seen in those parts. Now, however, they have quite disappeared. During hay and harvest time many of these old Wiltshire and Berkshire wagons are used with only one horse, the vehicles being noticeable for their

dreys and nests. These should all be poked out with the help of a long pole, and, if necessary, a ladder, and wherever occupants are found they should be shot.

Most local War Agricultural Committees will support any effort made to destroy these pests, and will be only too willing to supply further information.—L. F. HORNE, *Frankham Dene, Mark Cross, Tunbridge Wells, Kent*.

SWALLOWS WINTERING IN MALAYA

SIR.—Malaya is a favoured wintering resort of swallows, many thousands of which arrive during September and remain until March or April.

They select the larger towns in which to pass the winter, presumably because of the perching facilities afforded by the telephone and electric wires that run along the main streets. The native population of the favoured towns regard the presence of these birds as a good omen for the coming year.

The accompanying flashlight photograph was taken by me in the town of Ipoh, Perak, and gives some idea of the remarkable sight presented by these swallows roosting in one of the main streets. C. B. REDWAY, *Greycliffe, Lower Warberry Road, Torquay, Devon*.

THE FUTURE OF AN OLD MILL

SIR.—I noticed recently an announcement that "Soham Mill, one of the last windmills in East Anglia," is to be demolished.

Although the eastern counties abound with the derelict remains of windmills, as recent correspondence in COUNTRY LIFE testified, there are comparatively few mills still in a working condition. Only last year the Delce Mill in Rochester, Kent, was scheduled for demolition; and it now appears that Soham Mill, although I remember seeing it working in 1945, is also to be pulled down.

Cannot some steps be taken to ensure the preservation of these relics of a bygone England, especially in these times, when the countryside is being altered so rapidly?—PETER COARD (Sergt.), *R.A.F., Tangmere, Chichester, Sussex*.

THREAT TO A MOUNTAIN SHRINE

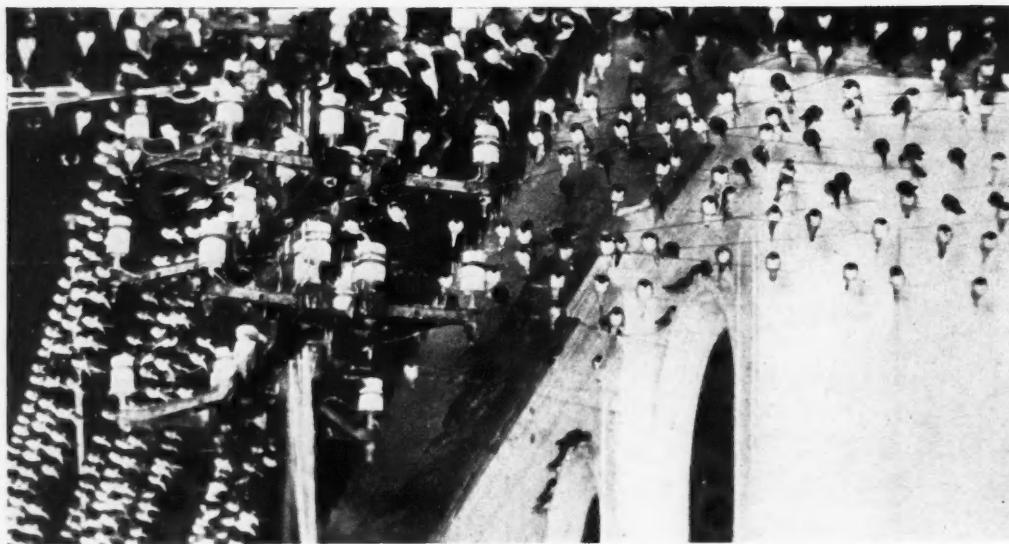
SIR.—Apropos of the Editorial Notes about training areas in your issue of March 7, I wonder if your readers realise that the lovely little church of Partrishow, Brecon, with its incomparable carved rood screen, which formed the subject of an article *A Mountain Shrine* in COUNTRY LIFE January 4, 1946, is now under sentence, inasmuch as it lies within an area that the War Office propose to take for training purposes.

The county of Brecon is apparently being made to sacrifice some 16 to 17 per cent. of its total area, including some of the most beautiful valleys and farm-houses in Wales.—IRNE RADCLIFFE, 8, Elm Row, Hampstead, N.W.3.

WHAT IS A GROUND FROST?

SIR.—Without in any way being critical of your reply to the question "What is a ground frost?" published in your issue of February 7, I should like to suggest the following answer.

A ground frost occurs when the ground is cooled by radiation (loss of heat by rays, or diffusion) or by lowering of the temperature of the air in contact with it so as to reduce its temperature to 32° F. or below. When sufficient cooling occurs owing to radiation, the air immediately above the ground is cooled, and if it is



SWALLOWS ROOSTING ON TELEGRAPH WIRES IN THE MAIN STREET OF A MALAYAN TOWN

See letter: *Swallows Wintering in Malaya*

had been extremely restive, and just before the time at which he was wounded began to howl. It was eventually calmed down after a short while.

Was this merely a coincidence, or is the terrier's behaviour attributable to its possessing a sixth sense?—JOHN WILLIAMS-ELLIS, *Careg Felin, Portmadoc, North Wales*.

THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE

SIR.—Major C. S. Jarvis's recent references to thought transference between wild creatures and human beings remind me of a strange experience of my own, which I mention because it seems the reverse of those recorded by him.

Rather more than 25 years ago, when we lived in the south of Ireland, we had a tame jackdaw, and one day when I was going out in the pony-trap and was about a hundred yards from the house, I suddenly had the feeling that "Jack" was in trouble and wanted my help. This feeling became so strong that, after some hesitation and feeling a great fool, I turned back, drove to the stables, and went in search of him.

I shouted for some time about the place and never heard him answer nor saw him; at last, at the end of the flower garden, I saw a hawk rise and fly away, and found "Jack" with his feet clamped to the ground amid a quantity of feathers—his and the hawk's. He was nearly done, but recovered after a considerable period of speechlessness.—A. TENNYSON, *The Grange, Ingrave, Brentwood, Essex*.

A LIMIT TO LENGTH

SIR.—In *A Countryman's Notes*, published among the COUNTRY LIFE

owner shall forfeit forty shillings, one third to the Surveyor, etc., another to the overseers etc. to be levied by warrant of any Justice. 22 Car. 2."

The inference would appear to be that the length of the team, and not the number of horses in it, constituted the offence.

In another old manual for J.P.s, *Choice Presidents (sic) upon all Acts of Parliament relating to the Office and Duty of a Justice of the Peace*, printed in 1690, more information can be found.—DIANA E. BROWN (Miss), *Dowcra's Manor, Shepreth, Royston, Hertfordshire*.

THE HERMAPHRODITE IN HOLLAND

SIR.—With reference to the letter in COUNTRY LIFE of January 24 about the use in Norfolk of the farm cart known as a hermaphrodite, in Southwest Brabant we also have this sort of wagon.

Originally only carts were used, but with the introduction of artificial fertilisers several years ago rotation was changed, and more grain in clover-hay (from temporary leys) had to be transported.

Wagons were not known in that part of the country, and so, by the putting together of two carts, the "trein" (train) as we call it, came into being.—G. KOSTER, 19, *Hoogeweg, Bennekom, Holland*.

TYPES OF FARM WAGON

SIR.—The recent correspondence about the hermaphrodite reminded me that I have frequently seen an almost identical type of farm cart in mid- and south Suffolk, but never in Norfolk. However, there are two types of farm

unusual width—a relic of the pair-horse days.

I have seen only two three- or four-horse timber teams since 1940; one in Monmouthshire and one in the Cotswolds.

Another district that still has unusual local colour in these matters is north Kent and the Medway valley, where there are still farm implements of all types drawn by three- or four-horse teams, which have nearly died out everywhere else in the British Isles.

Pembroke is unique among all Welsh counties in that it is the only one that has any four-wheel farm wagons, the other counties in Wales, in common with all Scotland, Ireland, and the Isle of Man, having only two-wheel farm carts.—J. H. WEBSTER, 2, Park Hill Road, Harborne, Birmingham 17.

MENACE OF GREY SQUIRRELS

SIR.—During the recent extremely cold spell small birds up and down the country will have suffered very much and died by their thousands. There is another menace that will deplete their numbers still further, namely the grey squirrel, to the necessity of keeping down which you have frequently referred.

I think I am right in saying that there are about two hundred Grey Squirrel Clubs in operation, mostly in the southern counties, and that they accounted last year for nearly 60,000 of these foreign invaders.

Between now and the coming out of the leaves on the trees is the best time to attack grey squirrels; while the weather is still cold they are to be found, on most occasions, in their



THE SINGLE-STORY ORANGERIES AND TWO OF THE FIRST SPRING FRAMES OR GREENHOUSES AT THE BOTANIC GARDEN AT OXFORD; FROM THE OXFORD ALMANACK FOR 1766. (Right) THE TWO-STORY BUILDINGS IN THE GARDEN AS THEY ARE TO-DAY
See letter: Orangeries that Grew

lowered below that of its dew point, the moisture (water vapour) is deposited in the form of a white crystalline deposit, known as "hoar frost"—if the dew point is below 32° F. If, however, there is little water vapour in the air near the ground, and the cooling of the ground

modern greenhouses. But I think the two illustrations enclosed may be of particular interest.

One shows the orangeries or houses for "tender greens" (to quote an old description) in the Botanic Garden at Oxford, as they were in 1766, together with early frames on either side of the Danby Gate. The other photograph was taken recently and shows the present state of things; the structure of the orangeries proved so sturdy that another storey could be built above, and the former orangeries, plus this addition, now house the herbarium, laboratories and library of the University's Department of Botany.

I am indebted to Magdalen College for permission to photograph the Almanack head of 1766 in the College Library.—J. D. U. WARD, Berkshire.

SPINNING WOOL IN SWITZERLAND

SIR.—In these days of mass production it is always good to encounter handicrafts that are holding their own. In the village of Spruga, on the Swiss-Italian frontier, I found several of the village girls spinning wool on a primitive treadle spinning-wheel. The wool is coarse stuff, and the resultant yarn is used for carpet-making. Output may not be great, but such an occupation for spare moments brings a useful addition to income.

The girl depicted in my photograph is wearing the wooden clogs of Ticino, the originators of the modern wedge heel.—DOUGLAS DICKINS, 19, Lambolle Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

CHEST OR BEDSTEAD?

SIR.—The enclosed photograph of the whole front of the piece of furniture in Hambleden Church, Buckinghamshire, of which only a panel is shown in your issue of January 17, makes it difficult to see that it formed any part of a bedstead.

In *Records of Buckinghamshire* (1903), Mr. J. C. Fox described the chest, as it seems to have been, and referred to the very similar heraldry displayed in carving in similar fashion at the Vyne near Basingstoke, which was built early in the 16th century by William, first Baron Sandys, who was very intimate with both Wolsey and Foxe.

A tomb in Hambleden Church bearing the Sandys Arms is probably that of Henry, son of the second Baron, who died during his father's lifetime, leaving a widow, Elizabeth,



I can assure him that this practice of tying the trousers in below the knees is still employed by quite a number of agricultural labourers, road workers and the like (chiefly veterans of the old school) here on the Hampshire-Surrey border, more especially on the Surrey side.—PETER MICHAEL, 56, Cranmore Lane, Aldershot, Hampshire.

IN NORFOLK

SIR.—I was very interested in Major Jarvis's remarks on yarks. In Norfolk many of the older men still favour this fashion, using straps instead of string. Originally these straps were known as yanks in these parts.

I have always understood that the reason for their use was to keep the legs warm; moreover, by drawing the trouser leg up slightly they gave greater freedom to the knees. Demand for yank straps is now very small, but this has been brought about by the general use of water-boots, I think.—GERALD G. COOK, Market Place, Dereham, Norfolk.

MYSTERY OF THE SCENTED MUSK

SIR.—May I reply to your comments on my letter about the mystery of the scented musk in your issue of February 7?

Careful tabulation shows that the scented musk disappeared not suddenly but very gradually between the first reference in 1878 and the last ("the ghost of the old scent") in



A SWISS GIRL SPINNING WOOL FOR MAKING CARPETS

See letter: Spinning Wool in Switzerland

is insufficient, no condensation takes place, although the temperature of the ground may be below 32° F., and a ground frost, which in this instance is often known as a "black frost," still results.

The criterion of a ground frost is that the ground achieves a very low temperature, i.e. between 30°-32° F. or lower, but only the air just above it is affected. This normally occurs only at night, in autumn and winter, but occasionally in the spring in this country, and the frost normally disperses during the day owing to the sun's heating, whether seen or not.

A ground frost is of particular danger to young crops, e.g. early potatoes, strawberry plants, and so forth, as it may occur quite late in the spring or early summer without regard to the general temperature experienced during the day. Conditions favourable for its formation are sky clear, no clouds (or about two-tenths—not more), little or no wind, and these usually occur during fine spells.—M. C. PASCOE (Commander, R.N., Ret.), Southcott House, Ware Giffard, North Devon.

ORANGERIES THAT GREW

SIR.—All readers of COUNTRY LIFE who are interested in such matters will know how greenhouses developed from orangeries, which were originally much more like ordinary one-storey dwellings with large windows than

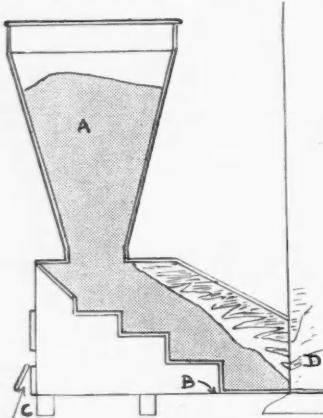


EARLY TUDOR PANELLING IN HAMBLEDEN CHURCH, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

See letter: Chest or Bedstead

1928 (a period of about 50 years), both reported in R.H.S. lectures.

Some plants, it is true, retain their scent when propagated by seed. Others sometimes do not, e.g. heliotrope, as I found when I followed up a letter in COUNTRY LIFE in 1944. Carnation growers sometimes find the same fading when propagating by seed. It seems to depend largely, though not entirely, on Mendelian Law and on which parent strain is dominant. But it was also due, in the musk, to contributory causes, e.g. carelessness or ignorance in propagat-



HOPPER FOR SAWDUST BURNING FURNACE. A, Sawdust; B, Perforated Base; C, Draught; D, Furnace

See letter: *Running on Waste*

ing by seed and by insects cross-fertilising from many wild unscented plants; the introduction of more popular, showy plants which took the place of musk plants; introduction of gas in dwelling-rooms; severe winters; and so on.

All these causes, which have been duly checked by the opinions and experience of reliable persons, were among the additional factors I referred to as also contributing to the disappearance of the scented musk plant in England.—EDWARD F. GRAY, Ripple Hall, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

LINKS WITH THE GUNPOWDER PLOT

SIR,—I have read with interest the recent correspondence, and the notes in *The Estate Market* column, concerning Holbeche House, which was a lot in the auction of Lord Dudley's estates near Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, and its connection with the Gunpowder Plot. It is almost certain that the present house incorporates but few remains of the original one. A noted Worcestershire antiquarian informed me some time ago that he was of the opinion that only the huge interior chimney had survived. The present house dates from the 18th century.

At the Royal Academy Exhibition in 1872 the late Ernest Crofts, R.A., exhibited a picture entitled *The Last Stand*, which at the time excited great interest. Later it disappeared, and as far as I am aware it has never been found. Perhaps some of your correspondents may know more of this?—GEOFFREY W. BEARD, Downdale, Apley Road, Wollaston, Stourbridge, Worcestershire.

THE SHEPHERDESS

SIR,—Some weeks ago you were kind enough to publish under *Collectors' Questions* a photograph of a portrait of a lady dressed as a shepherdess, believed to be by Wissing.

The identity of the lady has not been established, though she does not appear to be Lady Dering, as was first suggested. I have, however, learnt that this portrait was purchased at a sale at French Park, Co. Roscommon, that took place after the death of the third Lord de Freyne in 1868.

Possibly this information will suggest a clue as to the sitter's identity to one of your readers.—A. I. MACNAGHTEN, Hadleigh House, Sheet Street, Windsor, Berkshire.

RUNNING ON WASTE

SIR,—Two or three years ago there was, I think, a discussion in COUNTRY LIFE on the possibility of using sawdust in a domestic boiler. I am sure many of your readers, like myself, would be interested and grateful if you would tell us again the method your correspondent found most successful in using it. I believe it required a special hopper.—JOAN BERKELEY, Hanwell Castle, Banbury, Oxfordshire.

[Any additional means of heating that can be devised is especially welcome in these days of fuel shortage, and we accordingly gladly reproduce the illustrated letter about burning sawdust as fuel which appeared in our issue of July 7, 1944:—

SIR,—I enclose a rough cross-section sketch of a sawdust hopper which I saw in use heating some Wolverhampton business premises in 1928. It can be adapted for use with any existing coal- or coke-burning furnace. It is a funnel-shaped arrangement of sheet iron, firmly attached to the front of the furnace. Its simplicity of construction makes for ease in operation, for the only attention necessary is to fill the hopper when required. There are no flues to regulate, the automatic feed being entirely reliant upon gravity, and the heat is regulated by the amount of air admitted, the draught being controlled by the small door at the bottom of the hopper. The cost of heating in 1928 was estimated at less than 2s. a room per month in the event of the sawdust having to be bought at 6d. a sack.—G. BERNARD HUGHES, Sevenoaks, Kent.—ED.]

ROYAL LEGEND

SIR,—Your correspondent Mr. Cautley is wrong in stating, in his letter published on February 7, that the legend *Exurgat Deus dissipentur inimici eius* was used exclusively by James I.

All the coins issued by Charles I's Civil War mints at Shrewsbury, Oxford, Bristol, and Lundy Island, and some of those of Exeter and Weymouth, showed this legend (cf. *English Coins*, by G. C. Brooke).—PETER E. LEACH, Eastdene, Holly Bush Lane, Sevenoaks, Kent.

A HEIDELBERG SCENE

SIR,—In reply to Dr. W. G. Booth's question about his landscape illustrated in your issue of January 24, the castle represented is Heidelberg Castle on the River Neckar. I have a postcard bought in Heidelberg showing the same scene.—ARTHUR F. HARDY, Park House, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire.



A PALM SQUIRREL CLIMBING THE TRUNK OF A COCONUT TREE. (Left) A HOODED COBRA BEING PAINTED ON A COCONUT TREE TO FRIGHTEN AWAY SQUIRRELS AND RATS

See letter: *Saving Coconuts from Damage*

funereal furniture, even the insides of the stone coffins were coloured.

Enamelled glass was not common in Roman times, but coloured glass was. The glass was getting purer and the enamelling was not necessary.



GLASS WARE FROM BURIALS IN MACEDONIA. AN ENAMELLED VASE OF THE 5TH CENTURY B.C.; THE GLASS IS DEEP BLUE AND THE PATTERN RICH YELLOW. (Right) A PLAIN GLASS TUMBLER OF THE BRONZE AGE

See letter: *Old Enamelled Glass*

OLD ENAMELLED GLASS

SIR,—If I have read Mr. E. M. Elville's article in your issue of January 31 about old enamelled glass correctly, then, with due deference, I suggest that he has missed out the all-important beginning.

The first enamelled glass known is what is generally called "Phoenician," or perhaps better still "Mediterranean," and is certainly as early as the 5th century B.C. For example, one of the enclosed photographs shows a vase I excavated from a burial of the 5th century B.C. in Macedonia. The zigzag pattern is a brilliant yellow enamel on a deep blue vase. Some excellent examples of this work and period are on exhibition now in the King Edward VII gallery at the British Museum, close to the Mildenhall silver treasure.

The object of the enamelling was to give colour; the early glass-makers could not free the glass of air bubbles, or make it the "white" colour we know, and so it was ugly. Moreover, colour was essential; everything was colour. For example, the tombs, the

Moreover, Rome stood for essentials, whereas Greece had stood for art.

My other photograph shows a tumbler (so called because it tumbles) of plain impure glass, of a date much earlier than the enamelled Phoenician glass.—A. G. WADE, Ash Cottage, Bentley, Hampshire.

SAVING COCONUTS FROM DAMAGE

SIR,—Among the pests that bring loss to coconut cultivators in Ceylon are squirrels, monkeys and rats. Apart from gnawing the ripening nuts, they do untold harm by nibbling the flowering shoots and damaging the fruits when they are young and tender.

To prevent these animals climbing up the palms to the top, various methods are adopted. One device consists in painting in black ink, or drawing with tar, on the trunk of the palm, a few feet above the base, a fierce-looking cobra with distended hood and curling tail, apparently ready to strike at any intruder. In this way the unwelcome marauders are kept away, at least for a time.

Another contrivance is a structure composed of "cadjans" (dry coconut-leaf plaited together) and thorny sticks wound round the palm's stem some distance above the ground. This is supposed to keep away not only the above-named animals, but human rogues who trespass, chiefly at night, to plunder coconuts. Apart from being afraid that they will be pricked by the spiny twigs, the coconut-thieves think twice before they climb up the tree, for the rustling of the "cadjans" as they attempt to scale the barrier will give a clue to the estate-watcher who, gun in hand, is sure to shout out his challenge from his hut.—S. V. O. SOMANADDE, Batticaloa, Ceylon.

HINTON AMPNER HOUSE

SIR,—In my recent article on Hinton Ampner House the name of the joint architect of the alterations appears as Mr. Trenwith Wells. I feel it due to a friend of long standing to point out that it should be Wells, which I certainly wrote, and regret that I did not detect the printer's error.—CHRISTOPHER HUSSEY, 13, Cadogan Square, S.W.1.

GEORGE STUBBS

SIR,—I am preparing a life of the painter George Stubbs (1724-1806) and an illustrated catalogue raisonné of his work for future publication, and should be glad to hear of any works by him in private possession, or of any correspondence, documents or other material relating to him.—BASIL TAYLOR, 51, Oakley Gardens, London, S.W.3.



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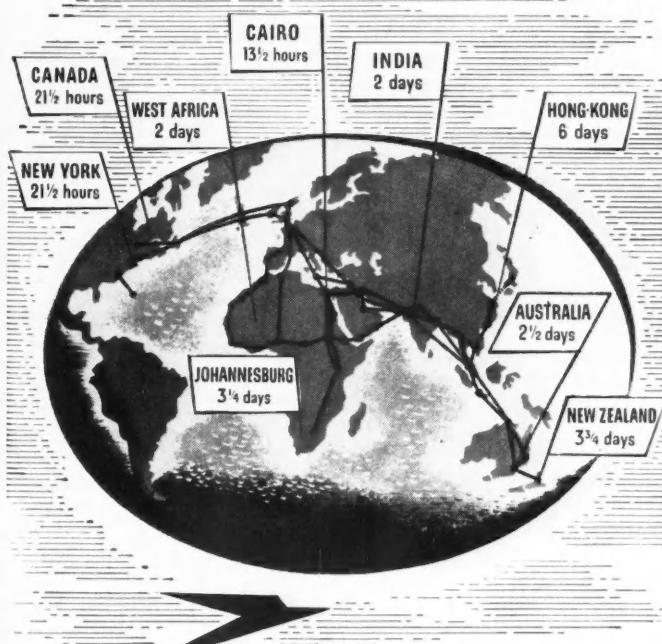
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NEW BOOKS

THREE LOVE STORIES

Reviews by HOWARD SPRING

MR. RICHARD MASON, whose first novel, *The Wind Cannot Read*, is published by Hodder and Stoughton (9s. 6d.), sets his tale in India and Burma during the recent war. Clearly, much that he writes in this book is derived from personal experience, and I see that one reviewer has allowed himself to wonder how Mr. Mason will go on when he has to rely on imagination rather than

emotional entanglements th
Japanese women.

Miss Wei had been living in London: she liked the English and wanted to help them. So she went to India, where British officers were taught Japanese so that they might do Intelligence work in Burma. She was one of the teachers, and she met Michael Quinn.

There is no need to go into the story of their brief and tragic association. Let it be enough to say that it is beautiful and moving, handled by the author with deep feeling and great skill. All the tragedy of the division between East and West, between men

THE WIND CANNOT READ. By Richard Mason
(Hodder and Stoughton, 9s. 6d.)

CHILDREN OF WRATH. By Edmond Buchet
(Collins, 7s. 6d.)

THE HAUNTED WOMAN. By David Lindsay
(Gollancz, 7s. 6d.)

MORE DEADLY THAN THE MALE. By Ambrose Grant
(Eyre and Spottiswoode, 9s.)

THE RETURN TO THE FARM. By Robert Henrey
(Peter Davies, 12s. 6d.)

not a question of imagination versus experience, but of the imaginative interpretation of experience, wherever this may come to a writer. Any writing which is not a mere record is a fusing of these two things into a third and quite different thing, and that third thing is creative writing. Wordsworth understood this when he wrote of

*the mighty world
Of eye and ear—both what they half
create,
And what perceive.*

And so, if we are to think of Mr. Mason's future as a novelist, what he has already done should be enough to go on.

It is a tribute to this young writer that one does speculate about his future. His first book is so good that it would be strange if we did not think with pleasant anticipation of more to come. The 1914-18 war effectively launched such writers as Richard Aldington, Ernest Hemingway and Remarque, but the years that followed saw them rigorously accepting life and interpreting it.

WOMAN OF THE "ENEMY"

Mr. Mason's present book is primarily a love story—the story of a British airman's love for a woman of the "enemy." Miss Wei, as she called herself, had adopted this Chinese name because it was not expedient to flaunt the fact of being Japanese, as she was. There was a time, of course, when the Japanese were our gallant little allies, and there was another time when the Chinese were our "enemies"; but life's like that; and at the time when Michael Quinn met Miss Wei it was the turn for Japan to be the enemy and for Englishmen to think twice about getting into

and their "enemies" is illustrated in this instance, and also the conquering power of love. If I were asked to give one outstanding instance of Mr. Mason's quality as a novelist, I should mention the last few pages in which Michael, straight from his love's deathbed, runs into his old friend Mario, married that day, and is induced to sleep in the bathroom, adjoining Mario's nuptial room. This is an extraordinarily poignant piece of work and, for the rest, whether he is describing the countryside of India or Burma, or dealing with the mixed bunch of his characters, Mr. Mason shows an equipment which makes one think with deep interest of his future.

A QUEER BOOK

Edmond Buchet's novel, *Children of Wrath* (Collins, 7s. 6d.), translated from the French by Marjorie Galvin, is another story of head-over-heels love. The scene is a psycho-analyst's establishment on the French Riviera. Theodore Hermies, the psycho-analyst, was much older than his wife Valentine. He had taken a materialistic view of life. There was not beyond what his probing could discover. When he married he told himself that "one should try to value one's wife the race rather than individual." But he began in association with her to discover the meaning of something I had formerly mocked at—true fidelity, the fidelity of the spirit."

However, this illumination came too late, for Valentine blazed into a love affair with a young student, and the book thereafter develops on the lines of Mr. Nigel Balchin's *Mine Own Executioner*. How is the physician so accustomed to handling the disorders of others, to heal himself? The

situation is accentuated by the murder of Valentine, victim of the doctor's half-witted brother, and by the coming of war.

Theodore is left utterly alone to ponder on the ecstasy that had come to Valentine and her lover—something which he had never imagined men were capable of experiencing. He began to see psycho-analysis as "too often the murderer of God," and too long for a glimpse of the Absolute that all his practice had denied. Finally, flying with the refugees out of Paris, tortured in mind and dying in body, he is granted this through a simple act of self-sacrificing love on the part of a stranger. It is a queer, illuminating book, another recognition of the world's present need for love above all.

COUNTRY-HOUSE FANTASY

One might say that this is the theme also of Mr. David Lindsay's *The Haunted Woman*, a book first published a quarter of a century ago and now re-issued by Gollancz (7s. 6d.). But here the method of presenting the theme is one that I, personally, find a trifle embarrassing. But that is a question of taste. I can only say that I am never happy with ghosts or spooks in any shape or form.

Mr. Lindsay presents us to Marshall Stokes, an underwriter, and Isbel Lomont, whom he is to marry. There is some question of Isbel's aunt settling down after a wandering life, and Marshall has heard of a remote and ancient country house that might suit. The owner is a man named Judge, "in the Birmingham brass trade."

That hardly promises to qualify a man as a romantic lover, especially as he is nearly sixty years old; but the development of the story is this: that, unseen save to Judge and Isbel, there are mysterious stairs opening here and there in Runskill Court. They ascend them, find themselves in rooms centuries old, look out upon scenes that belong to Saxon times and discover that they were made for one another.

This, not unnaturally, unsettles Isbel's feeling for Mr. Marshall Stokes. She realises that marriage with him would be a drab affair compared with the experience of love which comes to her in the upper rooms, and the engagement is broken off. Judge had died in the midst of one of his transcendental experiences, and the book ends with a hint of Isbel's returning to Marshall; but the essence of the thing is "love before all." However, the lesson doesn't strike home deeply to me when taught in circumstances so bizarre.

THE ROAD TO THE GALLOWS

If Mr. Lindsay gets off the ground, Mr. Ambrose Grant keeps both his feet firmly planted on it in a first novel called *More Deadly Than The Male* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 9s.). This is the story of George Fraser, a poor and inefficient person who filled the gaps in his life with dreams of power. He loved to imagine himself the master of base men like Capone and Dillinger, and, unhappily, a revolver and ammunition had come into his possession.

He got in with a bad couple, Sydney Brant and Cora, his mistress, who didn't dream of crime but went in for it in a sneak-thief fashion. Young Fraser's frantic boasting to them of his "past" among the gangsters of America, and the knowledge that he owned a gun, suggested to this precious pair that George could be useful. They knew him for the boastful liar he was, but allowed him to suppose that they swallowed all he had to say, and once they had diverted his footsteps into

their own criminal paths George's end on the scaffold was only a matter of time.

If you like books without an ounce of sentiment, books which move exclusively among the dirtiest riff-raff of great cities, books in which there is not one character with a trace of nobility or even of aspiration, you will like this one very much. It has a horrible feeling of authenticity—the authenticity of a small and loathsome part of life split off from the mass that might redeem it, and intensively studied in isolation.

VIRTUE AND VILLAINY

Leaving fiction, here is Mr. Robert Henrey's *The Return to the Farm* (Peter Davies, 12s. 6d.), which brings full circle the story Mr. Henrey has been telling for so long. He began by introducing us to the Norman farm which he bought before the war. Then came the flight to England with his wife and child, when the war broke out, and the agony of leaving behind his wife's mother, who was separated from the family when they embarked. There followed a number of books in which Mr. Henrey recorded the life of war-time London in a manner which I imagine will make them valuable to the historian of the future; and now at last, the war ended, we find Mr. and Mrs. Henrey with their child re-united at the farm with the old lady whose war-time experience in Paris had been hard and bitter.

The interest of this latest volume is in the author's re-creation, from what he learned on his return, of the life of a French village during the occupation. It is not a new story, but the now familiar one of what we would expect of human nature in those circumstances: the average mixture of virtue and villainy. But it is freshly told, and is a fitting crown to the series. If, indeed, it is the crown. Mr. Henrey seems inexhaustible, and no one would be less surprised than I if he found another book in the rehabilitation of the farm, so sadly despoiled and diminished by the passing of the war.

BIRDS OF SOUTH EUROPE

CAPTAIN G. K. YEATES is known to those interested in the photography of birds as one of our leading experts in the use of the camera for bird portrayal. His pictures of the smaller British birds are specially outstanding, but in *Bird Life in Two Deltas* (Faber, 15s.) he shows what his camera can do among the birds of southern Europe. This volume tells of visits to two deltas—to the delta of the Guadalquivir in Spain and to that of the Rhône where it flows through southern France into the Mediterranean. Actually, three visits are recorded, all in diaries, telling of the author's day-by-day experiences, and with many an interesting description of birds strange and not so strange, of their habits and doings, particularly when viewed from the near intimacy of a hiding-tent.

But the 68 plates, mostly reproductions of Captain Yeates's beautiful photographs, are bound to catch the attention before the book is read. From the little egret that figures on the jacket, in its snowy whiteness and with its long mane of breast plumes blown aside, to the series of shots of a penduline tit building its nest, all are remarkably fine pictures that will call for admiring envy by every user of a camera. Not only are the penduline tit photographs models of the bird photographer's art, but they are noteworthy because they show a nest in course of construction. Photographs of birds at the nest either brooding eggs or tending the young are legion, but records of nest-building are rare.

F. P.



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FARMING NOTES



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SIX-WEEK ARREARS ON THE LAND

FEW farmers can feel at all happy

about their cropping programme. On the heavier soils it has been impossible to get on to the land at all since October, and there are many thousands of acres intended for spring cropping yet to be ploughed. Now it seems that those farmers who did not order their compound fertilisers early in the season will have to manage with straight fertilisers—that is, the separate ingredients which they will have to mix on the barn floor. This is a tiresome business in itself, and fertilisers mixed in this way do not suit the combine drills which are now generally used on the larger farms. The combine drill, if it is to run smoothly, needs a dry fertiliser which is dropped alongside the seed grain. This gives the young corn a flying start, and a flying start was never more desirable than in this sowing season when work is already falling at least six weeks behind the normal schedule. Can anything be done to speed up progress by bringing in other reserves? It has been suggested that the Army and Air Force still have a number of tractors, and that these could be sent out to farms to help make good the arrears of seeding and cultivation. I do not know how many skilled ploughmen are still in the Services. There cannot be many, but I do remember that during the war the United States Army made an excellent job of cultivating and sowing a big stretch of downland on the Bath Road between Beckhampton and Devizes. Indeed, the Wiltshire War Agriculture Executive Committee were so pleased with the co-operation of the U.S. Army that they erected a notice-board as testimony to their good work.

Poultry Research

TWO centres of poultry research, one in England and the other in Scotland, are to be established by the Agricultural Research Council and investigation work on transmissible diseases for which special conditions are needed is to be carried out at other centres. In making this announcement the Agricultural Research Council, which is always retiring in publicity matters, is careful to state that the pace at which this development can be carried out depends mainly on finding enough trained scientific workers and providing the necessary buildings. There is a great shortage of biologists, who are the people best qualified to tackle poultry research; so we must not expect any lightning results. But it is, at any rate, comforting to know that the A.R.C. does realise the need for expanding research in the poultry field. Provision for this kind of work has been far from adequate here in the past; the United States and Canada have forged ahead of us, but not all the new knowledge they have obtained is applicable here.

Brakes on Trailers

ANY new trailer to run behind a tractor must have an efficient braking system if its unladen weight exceeds two hundredweight. This is the new rule to go into force on July 1, but the farmer who already has a trailer capable of taking up to four tons laden weight is allowed five years' grace, that is until 1952, before he can be convicted for not having an efficient braking system. Trailers without brakes are still limited to speed of 10 miles per hour. This seems a strange time to introduce a new requirement about fitting of brakes to agricultural trailers. I doubt whether the makers can find the brakes to fit to trailers. Is there any evidence

that trailers without brakes are a menace on the public roads?

Lack of Iodine

THOSE who live in the chalk districts know something about iodine in farm stock as well as human beings, but I did not know that lack of iodine in the water in some chalk districts may be responsible for young animals being born weak or dead. A farmer who has suffered from this trouble asks me to pass on some information that he has obtained from the Iodine Education Bureau. It is established that various unhealthy conditions, such as the weakness of foals unable to stand and suck, and goitre in calves, lambs and goats are evidence of iodine deficiency. These extreme troubles do not, so far as I know, occur at all frequently in this country, but it is certainly a wise precaution to include a little iodine in the mineral mixture which is generally fed to young stock. I remember that when we had some trouble with wooden tongue in calves it was iodine that was recommended as the best remedy. My cattle always have access to minerals that contain iodine. This was not enough to ward off the infection, which they picked up in some mysterious way. We have not had any wooden tongue for the past ten years, and certainly I do not want to see it again.

Farm Figures

IN our everyday farming we all of us have to do many mental calculations and it is a great help to have a reference book to aid the human mind. For instance, the average cut of meadow hay for the whole country is 22 cwt. to the acre and of first cut seeds ley 30 cwt. to the acre. A truss of old hay is cut out to weigh 56 lb. and a truss of new hay (before September 1) is cut out to weigh 60 lb. A fully grown hen would eat on the average 4 oz. of food daily. A bushel of barley weighs 56 lb. and a bushel of wheat 63 lb. A small pig can be reckoned to double its weight in 14 days, a calf in 47 days and a human baby in 180 days. These items and many other useful figures are given conveniently in one of the new booklets, *Farm Figures*, published by the Pilot Press for the National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs. They cost 1s. each. Another which has just appeared is intended for those who need some practice in reckoning. To answer such problems as "have we enough hay and mangolds to last our cows for the winter?" needs some reckoning, and if it can be done readily and with some confidence in its accuracy the farmer saves himself a lot of worry. We can all sharpen our wits to advantage on the mental problems that are posed in *Farm Reckoning*.

Straw for Paper Making

ONCE again farmers who are close to one of the paper mills which can use straw will be able to sell their straw at £4 a ton to the local mill. This is the price paid for good quality wheat straw in bales. Only a small part of the wheat straw which farmers have surplus to their own requirements for bedding can find a market with the paper mills. There are, I know, people who say that it is a crime for the farmer to sell any straw off the farm, but it cannot all be made into farmyard manure, and ploughing in straw is not very satisfactory. In these days when we have to conserve all our natural resources it is strange that some ingenious mind has not found a use for straw that is surplus to farm needs.

CINCINNATUS.

THE ESTATE MARKET

LAND BOARD CRITICISM

THE proposed new authority known as the Central Land Board, designed to exercise a comprehensive control over the operations of the Town and Country Planning administration as foreshadowed by the Bill, is meeting with severe criticism. It was generally understood that the Board would be a completely independent authority, consisting of a chairman and vice-chairman, who would hold office permanently and be pensionable, and that the rest of the members would be selected and would retire in rotation. On careful examination of the Bill, however, it transpired that the Minister of Town and Country Planning reserved power to give directions to the Board in the performance of their functions. An offer that such power would be restricted to "giving general directions" fell far short of what the opponents of the Bill regarded as essential.

The feeling of mistrust about the matter may be gauged by the fact that Sir H. Lucas-Tooth, M.P., opposing the proposal, stigmatised it as "the most tyrannous three lines of legislation yet produced in this Parliament." Opposition to the proposal proved of no avail in the discussion by the Standing Committee of the House of Commons, so it remains to be seen whether what may happen in the administration of the proposed powers under the Act will justify the opinion of its opponents that the Minister "would be revealed as the first dictator this country has seen since the time of Oliver Cromwell."

PROPERTY OWNERS' PROTEST

LOOMY forebodings as to the results of the operation of the proposals in the Town and Country Planning Bill have been expressed by the Association of London Property Owners. They say that one consequence is bound to be that the Government, through the planning authority, will find itself saddled with all new developments, at a fantastic cost to the State, and that the proposals are "the biggest blunder yet made in legislation and a disaster for the country."

Enlarging on the condemnatory analysis in their Report, the chairman, Mr. W. Stanley Edson, said: "It is not generally realised that this is nothing else than nationalisation of landed property. It is daylight robbery. Hundreds of thousands of small owners will have their property swept away from under them." Another well-known figure in real estate affairs, speaking at the same meeting said: "It really looks as if Aneurin Bevan complained to Mr. Silkin, 'I cannot stop private building: you stop it.' The measure as it stands is calculated to stop everyone but the wealthiest of private builders ever building again." The plea for appropriating development rights and other interests in land seems to rest in part on the assumption that land is held by an affluent class, wringing a large income from oppressed rent-payers.

COROLLARIES OF OWNERSHIP

SOME people are apt to forget that interference with the complicated and interwoven interests that make up the entity known as ownership ultimately, and at no very remote point, cannot fail to affect and deprecate the resources of persons who would be surprised that their well-being is in any way bound up with the maintenance of land values. Let them examine the balance sheet of most insurance companies and see how many millions of pounds are invested in land, houses and business premises,

and then let them compute, if they can, how the resultant rents, or the interests on mortgages, contribute to the ability of the companies to look after the policy-holders as well and as liberally as they do, whether the policies are for a mere £10 or £20 or run up to £100,000 or over.

The figure of £300-million for development rights is purely conjectural, and it may be that a temperate estimate would put them at something more nearly thrice that amount. The possibility of eventual use of land for some fresh and remunerative project has always been regarded as valuable, and certain Colleges, for example, which have benefited extensively through developing suburban sites for housing, business premises and factories, cannot fail to be adversely affected by the provisions of the Bill.

VISCOUNT ST. VINCENT'S LAND

VISCOUNT ST. VINCENT has instructed Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley to sell his estate at Sutton-on-Derwent, in the East Riding of Yorkshire which extends to 2,380 acres, and includes farms that are specially suitable for sugar-beet growing. These range in area from 100 acres to 350 acres, and the rental value (exclusive of fishing and shooting, and the small Georgian house called Sutton Hall) exceeds £3,090. First-rate pheasant shooting can be had all over the estate, and there are four miles of fishing in the Derwent. The property passed to the vendor's family in 1834, on the death of his cousin, Sir Thomas Clarges, the fourth and last baronet.

Messrs. Knight, Frank and Rutley have sold Hallow Park, three miles from Worcester, to Dr. Barnardo's Homes. Records of the property go back at least as far as 1575, when Queen Elizabeth stayed there. It belonged for many years to the See of Worcester, but in 1645, being then Crown property, was sold to a private purchaser; later, however, it again passed into the hands of the bishopric. The house was rebuilt in 1914 according to designs by Mr. J. C. Corlette.

The Grange, a Georgian house at Crawley Down, Sussex, will be offered with 35 acres by the same firm at an early date.

ORCHID-GROWING IN HAMPSHIRE

LADY M'GRIGOR has requested Messrs. John D. Wood and Co. to sell Whitethorn, a modern house and about 10 acres, near Winchester. The late Lieut.-Colonel Sir Charles M'Grigor's collection of orchids, available with the property, originated from that formed by Mr. Guy Harben.

NEIGHBOUR TO CHEQUERS

MESSRS. CURTIS AND HENSON have sold, in conjunction with Messrs. Gosling and Redway, the freehold residence Lady Mede, Kimble, near Princes Risborough, Buckinghamshire, belonging to Mrs. Stewart. This property is adjacent to the Chequers estate. The purchaser is Mr. Bond-Smith. The firm has sold also Howden Court, Tiverton, a Georgian country house in Devon. The owner was Mrs. M. D. Dunsford, and the purchaser Mr. Harman-Smith.

The Scottish Home Department, Messrs. Grey, Lucas and Partners announce, has acquired Castle Huntley, Perthshire, which lies between Perth and Dundee and overlooks the River Tay. It is said to have been built about 1450 by the second Baron Gray of Gray. It was later in the possession of the Lyons family. The vendor's family first went there in the early 18th century. Included in the sale are some 70 acres of park lands.

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NOTES ON THE NEW FABRICS



NEW weaves have been given their first showing in the Mayfair collections; a few of the more spectacular of these are reserved for export, but a limited amount of most will also be available for this country. Novelties include a dress-weight velours, an attractive superfine woollen with a soft handle and a surface like a velvet, and an equally pliable but considerably thicker cloth woven to look like suède. The latter has a short close pile, and is made up into a caramel-coloured all-purpose top-coat, also into a dinner frock in canary yellow with a jaunty bolero and a sheath dress zipped right down the front. Dress-weight tweeds in flecked and intricate basket patterns made many of the trim coat-frocks shown under jackets or long coats in a thicker toning tweed. Blue serge has been revived, in a version softer to handle than the trusted friend of the Edwardians. Black net, laid on a Nattier blue wool frock, was an idea and gave a shot effect that was attractive. The short sleeves and the yoke were left undimmed, the rest of the dress veiled.

Striped fabrics outnumbered all others and were in wool, rayon and cotton. For the suitings, they were mostly fine and smooth-surfaced, pin-striped in two strong colours laid side by side so that the over-all effect was shot; for the tweeds, shadow-stripes or mixed diagonal and herring-bone stripes. A velours with a diagonal stripe in the weave was another interesting woollen. Enchanting striped silks, some French, some English, were featured in gay colours and with the stripes graded in size.



Corduroy coat in dusty pink or gold, double-breasted with slit pockets. Dereta. Plumed felt from Miss Hammond

(Left) Dice-checked country tweed—oatmeal, green, russet brown, blue—with deep arm-holes and a narrow nicked cuff. Aquascutum. Up-turned felt. Pissot and Pavé

A crisp taffeta at Stiebel made a dress reminiscent of "Giselle," canary yellow, cherry and pink, used in very narrow stripes for a full bunched skirt and a tight bodice. French taffeta, where a fir-tree green ground has half-inch coral stripes and chalklines in yellow and white, has been shown in most collections. Angele Delanghe makes it into a short-skirted evening dress, a ballerina skirt plus a tight bodice that is one of the big fashion styles of the spring. Hardy Amies used butcher blue and white cotton in broad awning stripes for a crisp dress with a full skirt ending six or seven inches from the floor, with full-blown red roses tucked in at the waist of the prim bodice. A wonderful graded Scottish cotton was shown by Peter Russell, the colours shaded in deep horizontal bands, clay red, candy pink, sunflower yellow and fawn, the skirt wide and gored, ending well above the ankles, and the simple bodice tied on both shoulders.

Rayons are magnificent everywhere, from the stiff polished English satins and the French poulets for picture-dresses to matt crêpes for day-time, and some heavy jerseys for draped frocks. Florals continued the stripe theme with flowery garlands in bright mixed colours interspersed with broad stripes in a deep shade. Nylon georgette made crisp bouffant frocks for débutantes with billowing skirts and strapless bodices. The ottoman silk woven in England has a wonderful texture, has been shown in black and grey as well as the cherry red that Hartnell used for a summer

(Continued on page 486)